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FOR EVERY READER**
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SHOPS AND LITTLE HORRORS

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what baby books
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**VOTE FOR YOUR
MILLENNIUM
FAVOURITES**
Let the people decide,
says Alan Coren

Attack outrages business leaders

Labour 'front men' exposed by Heseltine

By JILL SHERMAN, ANDREW PIERCE AND PHILIP BASSETT

MICHAEL HESELTINE enraged some of Britain's top businessmen yesterday by accusing them of being front men for the Labour Party and of writing a politically motivated report.

Having demanded an invitation to speak at a conference to be addressed by Tony Blair, the Deputy Prime Minister, Heseltine insulted his hosts by claiming that the whole event was a "set up" to give the illusion that Labour had business support.

He then angered British Airways as well, by claiming that it had struck a deal with Labour to win exemption from its proposed windfall tax on privatised utilities.

Mr Heseltine made his allegations at a conference held in London to launch the report, *Promoting Prosperity*, by the Commission on Public Policy and British Business, whose members include the supermarket chief David Sainsbury, the British Aerospace chairman Bob Baskin, the GEC managing director George Simpson, and Sir Christopher Harding, chairman of Legal & General, which regularly contributes to the Conservative Party.

The report came out in support of a minimum wage, the Social Chapter of the Maastricht Treaty, British participation in a single European currency and an independent Bank of England with the freedom to set interest rates.

But Mr Heseltine denounced it as politically motivated and said: "I question the motives of those who cloak



their political intentions with academic respectability."

He also attacked the left-leaning Institute of Public Policy Research, which commissioned the report and hosted the conference, claiming that it was deliberately trying to give the impression that Labour was supported by businessmen when this was clearly not the case.

"This is a front for the Labour Party," he said. "This event is designed to give the impression that Tony Blair is speaking to an audience of commercial men and women. The trouble is that most of them are from the public sector, the media and admen."

Mr Heseltine also irritated both British Airways and Labour with his remarks about the proposed windfall tax. "We read that British Airways have escaped the net," he said. "I've heard that there is no

such thing as a free lunch. Evidently, if you work at it, there can be free dinners." Mr Blair has had a number of dinners with leading industrialists, including Robert Ayling, chairman of British Airways, — but both sides denied last night that any deal had been made.

Mr Heseltine, who telephoned the institute last week demanding a slot at the conference to express the Government's view, later told BBC Radio 4's *PM* programme that he had been determined to expose the political leanings of the conference. "I could see the set up to give Tony Blair an apparently clear run. It would have been presented as an independent exercise. It wasn't," he said.

But Professor George Bain, the head of the London School of Business and chairman of the policy commission, was "flabbergasted" by Mr Heseltine's allegations. "I regard it as an insult to myself and to my colleagues to be branded a front organisation for the Labour Party," he said.

Professor Bain and fellow members of the commission later wrote to the *Financial Times* describing Mr Heseltine's remarks as "a piece of political knockabout". Rejecting the suggestion that the commission was trying to "curry favour" with Mr Blair, the letter went on to say: "We were rather surprised at his comments, given that the commissioners are drawn from across the political spectrum and represent all sectors of British business. We have no



Heseltine: "Event is designed to give the impression that Blair is speaking to commercial men and women"

party political agenda: our aim is simply to promote British prosperity."

Commission sources said that while they had expected Mr Heseltine to disagree with some of their recommendations, they were surprised that he had chosen to attack in such personal terms business leaders who had created considerable wealth for Britain. And one member said: "Michael Heseltine has been right to stress the importance of competitiveness. Our report addresses that issue in a serious way. It deserves better, from someone who ought to know better."

Professor John Kay, director-designate of the School for Management Studies at Oxford University and one of the authors of the report, said: "Michael Heseltine has been silly. I have not decided who I will vote for at the election. But if Mr Heseltine continues to publicly assert that I am a stooge for the Labour Party, then I will vote for the Labour Party."

Adair Turner, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, also dismissed the Labour "front" claim, saying: "I don't think that is how one should look at this report. It's a serious

report. We don't agree with everything in it, but it's important to be able, despite the political situation we are in, to respond critically but constructively to a serious report like this."

Even the Institute of Directors, the free-market business body, took a similar line. Its head, Tim Melville-Ross, was critical of a number of the report's proposals, but he examined it fully and welcomed some recommendations as constructive.

Commission profiles, and Matthew Parris, page 2
Peter Riddell, page 9

Whitehall lapse let UK firm sell arms to Hutus

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

AN OFFICIAL inquiry has found that the Government failed to implement all the requirements of a United Nations arms embargo on Rwanda, thus allowing a British company to supply weapons to extremist Hutu militia.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, admitted in a written Commons answer yesterday that the UN arms embargo was not implemented in the Crown dependencies, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. It was from the Isle of Man that the Mil-Tec Corporation masterminded the supply of military equipment worth more than £3.3 million to Rwandan militia in Zaire during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 — as disclosed in *The Times*.

The sale of arms was uncovered after papers were found in eastern Zaire when Hutu militia fled refugee camps there.

The Government announced last November that it had established an inter-departmental committee to see if there had been a gap in arms-trafficking controls. Mr Rifkind said that the lapse, which also included a delay in implementing the embargo in the dependent territories such as Gibraltar, Bermuda and Hong Kong, had been put right last month. A committee had also been set up to co-ordinate the imposition and lifting of embargoes.

Customs investigators were still seeking to establish whether there had been any illegal acts "coming within the UK's jurisdiction", he said.

Tony Lloyd, Shadow Foreign Minister, accused the Government of gross incompetence: "The Government has failed to provide adequate explanation of why it did not extend the arms embargo against Rwanda to the Isle of Man."



Blair: Tory anger stole his thunder

MP is taken from hospital to vote

A seriously ill Conservative MP was brought to the Commons from his hospital bed last night as the Government battled to avoid a defeat at the end of a health service debate.

Charles Goodson-Wickes, the MP for Wimbledon, complained about the decision by whips to bring him to Westminster two days after undergoing abdominal surgery.

Millwall set for administration

Millwall will be placed in administration this morning, becoming the first quoted football club to collapse. The club, which was relegated to the Nationwide Second Division last year, has £10 million of debts and is losing £3 million a year. The club will continue to play. Page 25

Tories lose Lords vote on gun law

By JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Government suffered a fresh defeat in the House of Lords last night when peers voted to pay compensation to gun clubs forced to close as a result of Michael Howard's new firearms legislation.

The Government had been prepared to pay only market value compensation worth about £150 million for large calibre handguns and their accessories, which will be made illegal by the Firearms (Amendment) Bill, introduced after the Dunblane massacre. Shooters' associations said that if the defeat stood, the Government would have to pay millions more in compensation.

The Lords voted by 158 to 135, a majority of 23, in favour of an amendment backed by Lord Swansea, the chairman of the British Shooting Sports Council, and many other Tory peers. The Home Secretary suffered a double defeat in the Lords on Monday over plans for police bugging powers.

However, the gun amendment is likely to be overturned when the Bill returns to the Commons. A similar amendment was defeated by MPs when the Bill first went through the House.

A second amendment last night, giving compensation to anybody who suffered loss as a result of the Bill, was defeated by 147 to 120, a Government majority of 27.

'Lowbrow' Del Boy gets it in neck from schools guru

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

DEL BOY and Rodney, the stars of *Only Fools and Horses*, were singled out yesterday as prime examples of the lowbrow culture undermining school standards.

Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, said that the stars of the BBC comedy, which attracted British television's highest audience yet, 24.35 million, at Christmas, were poor role models and their popularity reflected low national aspirations.

Another example of low cultural expectations was the choice of *The Lord of the Rings* as the nation's favourite book of the century. Mr Woodhead added, J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy epic came top of a poll by Waterstones, the booksellers, and Channel 4; the result dismayed Germaine Greer and other academics because writers such as Somerset

Maugham and J.B. Priestley were overlooked.

Mr Woodhead, in response to questions after a lecture in London on raising standards, said that it was the job of teachers to try to instil greater discernment. Parents and society generally also had to help to promote more edifying works instead of blaming teachers for failing to raise standards. "What was the most popular programme over Christmas? What is the most popular book? If *The Lord of the Rings* is our favourite book, what is it saying about our attitude towards quality in the arts?" Mr Woodhead asked.

"English teachers ought to be trying to develop discrimination. *The Lord of the Rings* is an immensely readable book, but it is not the greatest work of English literature this

century. Schools function within society and it is naive to blame schools for all social wrongs. I am at times pessimistic about cultural expectations and social support for teachers. If Del Boy and Rodney are the only role models available to the young, then we have problems."

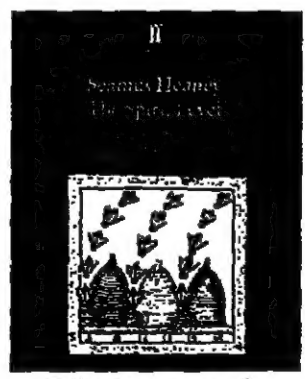
Mr Woodhead's views echoed those of Dr Nick Tate, the Government's most senior curriculum adviser, who called last year for more Mozart and less Blur on schoolchildren's CD players. A spokesman for John Sullivan, the writer of *Only Fools and Horses*, said: "If he [Mr Woodhead] watched *Only Fools and Horses*, he would know they went to a terrible school. However, they strive to be happy and they have good family values."

A BBC official said: "*Only Fools and Horses* is written by the top comedy writer in this country, if not the world, and the levels of performance and production values are excellent. It is popular programming and its aim is to entertain, so I don't see what Mr Woodhead is on about."

The Lord of the Rings was defended by Malcolm Bradbury, Professor Emeritus of American Literature at the University of East Anglia: "It has a very special cultural value. It is a book that crosses the magic line between childhood and adulthood."



Del Boy and Rodney: "reflect low national aspirations"



Collection was the first for five years

Whitbread prize goes to Heaney

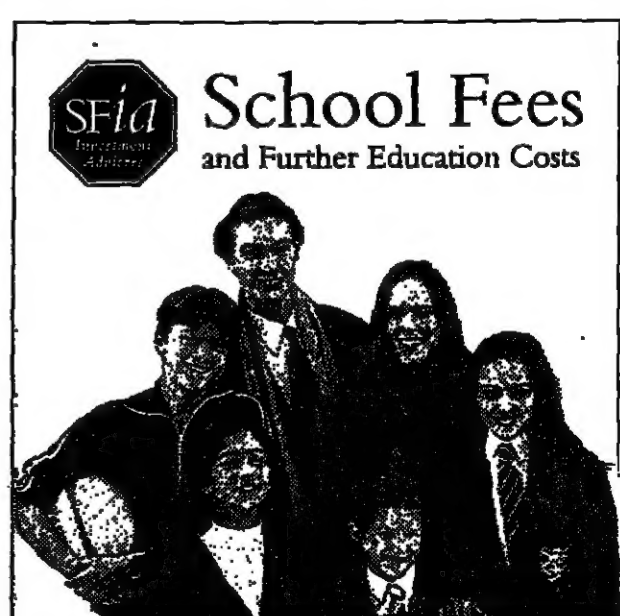
By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE £21,000 Whitbread Book of the Year award went last night to poet Seamus Heaney, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995.

He received it for his first new collection for five years, *The Spirit Level*, surprising many in the literary world, who had felt convinced that the novelist Beryl Bainbridge was going to win for *Every Man for Himself*.

The chairman of the judges, Malcolm Bradbury, said that it had been a "tightly fought decision" and hailed Heaney as a "poet of poets".

The other finalists were John Lanchester, whose *The Debt To Pleasure* won the first novel award, and Diarmuid MacCulloch, whose *Thomas Cranmer: A Life*, won of the biography category.



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Baby of reason is thrown out with the bathwater of farce

DURING the Prime Minister's recent Asian tour, mused Tim Rathbone (C. Lewes), "does he recall seeing a beautiful and rare flower, *Rafflesia anoldi*, parasitic in nature, with no stem or root, which with its vines embraces any handy shrub or tree?"

The mental image of Tony Blair as some kind of a political orchid cracked frozen faces even on the Opposition side. "Plant!" shouted delighted Tories, but if the question had been planted, someone had forgotten to tell

the Prime Minister: John Major seemed stumped for a reply. Not for the first time, it was the slightly too clever question from his own side, intended helpfully, that unsettled Mr Major.

He had no trouble yesterday with questions from the other side. Tony Blair took three kicks at the Government's management of the NHS, but ended up stubbing his toe.

As so often happens with Blair's and Major's spats these days, the two men yelled at each other for about

four minutes, one offering one proposition, the other another; those propositions being, on closer inspection, consistent with each other.

Tony Blair said that children in need of intensive care beds were being "turned away" from hospitals. John Major insisted that no child in need of a bed had been refused one. The two statements are easily reconciled by a third: that where a bed is unavailable in one hospital, it is offered in another.

Neither Blair nor Major was prepared to articulate

this obvious truth. It is insufficiently cheerful for the Government and insufficiently hysterical for the Opposition. So we had a ridiculous shouting match which, on this occasion, John Major won — by pointing out, to some effect, that if Mr Blair really believed that there was an NHS crisis, it was odd that he would not commit

himself to increasing NHS funding. At this point, the Baby returned to haunt us. We intend no disrespect to this baby or its parents, whose ordeal must have been terrible. Blame the politicians, who have turned a real infant into a political football, lending its ordeal a note of farce.

The Baby first made its Westminster appearance on MPs' first day back in the new year, when a backbench Labour MP raised with Madam Speaker (under Points of Order) reports that a baby had been turned away from a hospital in the North East and had been sent to Edinburgh, 120 miles away. Madam Speaker was unable to help.

The next day another Labour MP raised the Baby with Michael Heseltine at Prime Minister's Questions (John Major being away). Mr Heseltine, having been given

no details, was unable to help either.

Yesterday the Baby was back. Its journey to Edinburgh was recounted to the Prime Minister by David Clelland (Lab, Tyne Bridge). Your sketchwriter cannot be certain that this is the same Baby, but the story sounded familiar. Mr Major pointed out that if Mr Clelland had wanted a useful reply, he would have given him advance warning of the case.

To Edinburgh — once — and (we hope) back, the Baby has now made three visits to

Westminster. Nor, I fear, have we heard the last of it. Heaven send us the general election soon.

In the meantime, we watched Teresa Gorman (C. Billericay), in precautionary blue, outlining her mutinous plans for a Euro-referendum. Listening on the front bench below the gangway sat Sir Edward Heath, absolutely immobile, his face an image of frozen rage such as one might observe on some portly Roman senator caught in mid-pout by a deluge of Vesuvian ash at Pompeii.

The 'socialist' business leaders who are revealed to be solid Conservative supporters

Heseltine branded 'silly' for stooges gibe

BY ANDREW PIERCE AND ALASDAIR MURRAY

SOME of the captains of industry accused by Michael Heseltine yesterday of being stooges for the Labour Party have voted Conservative all their lives.

None of the 15 members of the Commission on Public Policy and British Business, which wrote a report critical of the state of the British economy, can have been more surprised to have been associated with the socialist cause than Sir Christopher Harding, the chairman of Legal & General insurance company.

Sir Christopher, 57, drew a veil over his political affiliations yesterday. But a spokesman for his company said: "We have regularly donated money to the Tory party. In 1995 we gave £30,000. Sir Christopher is not Labour." Sir Christopher was indeed regarded as one of Margaret Thatcher's favourite businessmen when she was Prime Minister, and was her choice as chairman of British Nuclear Fuels with a remit to prepare the industry for privatisation.

He is also a long-term director at Hanson, formerly run by the vocal Thatcher supporter Lord Hanson.

Professor John Kay, director-designate of the School for Management Studies at Oxford University, said that the Deputy Prime Minister had been "silly". He said: "Until the advent of new Labour I would have been astonished to have been associated with the



Chris Harding



John Kay



George Bain



Jan Hall

Labour Party because I voted Conservative. I have not decided who I will vote for at the election. But if Mr Heseltine continues to publicly assert that I am a stooge for the Labour Party then I will vote for the Labour Party."

Professor George Bain, the principal of London Business School, who was chairman of the team of authors, said he was "the original floating voter". He had come here from Canada in 1963 and been naturalised and had never been a member of a British political party. "I have voted for all of them and have yet to make my mind-up who I will vote for next time."

He has a string of director-

ships including with the Economist Group.

Mr Heseltine was on firm ground with his description of some members of the commission, an offshoot of the Institute for Public Policy Research, as Labour Party members. Gerald Holtman is the director of the institute and is close to Tony Blair.

However, Lord Hollick, the chief executive of United News and Media, who made a working peer by Neil Kinnock is the only out-and-out Labour supporter drawn from the business world who sat on the commission. His *Express* remains pro-Tory, despite rumours that it would shift its line.

David Sainsbury, who chairs the family founded supermarket chain, is one of the richest men in the country with a fortune estimated at more than £1.25 billion. Mr Sainsbury almost single-handedly bankrolled the Social Democratic Party, but has maintained his interest in politics since that party's demise through support for think-tanks such as the centrist Social Market Foundation, of which he is patron, and the IPPR. He also supports aid work and charity projects through his Gatsby Charitable Foundation.

Mr Sainsbury revealed that he was too disillusioned to vote at the last election but

said more recently that he will vote for Tony Blair — if he votes at all this time. In contrast, cousin Tim Sainsbury is a Tory MP and former minister.

Bob Bischof, the former chairman of Boss Group, has been described by the *Financial Times* as the best known German businessman living in Britain, his home for 30 years. He served for a spell with Truhand, the German government agency charged with the privatisation of East German state assets and now, in retirement, is working on a book describing a German's view of the current state of Britain.

He said: "I am not a front

for anybody. I am offended by the comments of Michael Heseltine." He laughed off the suggestion that he voted Labour. "I have a German passport. I in fact support Helmut Kohl in Germany who most people here would regard as a Tory. I am not a politician. I am an economist and businessman."

Jan Hall, the European chief executive of GGT Group, who is a former Veuve Clicquot Businesswoman of the Year, was also surprised by Mr Heseltine's comments. In 1996 she was made an OBE by John Major in recognition of her work for the Department of Trade and Industry.

"I am incensed," she said. "I

was an admirer of Margaret Thatcher and voted for her," she said. "I now regard myself as a centrist."

"The only reason I agreed to become involved in this exercise was because I was assured it had no partisan political involvement. It is there for the benefit of a Liberal Democrat government if they win the election." Other members of the commission include George Simpson, the managing director of GEC, who has not voiced any views on government policy recently.

Bob Bauman, the Harvard educated chairman of British Aerospace, is an American who has not made an issue of any political allegiances.

Redwood condemns calls for European smartcard

FROM LEILA LINTON IN BRUSSELS

THERE was a marked lack of enthusiasm in Britain last night for the proposed introduction of a European smartcard that would act as an identity document, driving licence and electronic purse.

It is possible that the card, proposed by MEPs and supported by the European Commission and several member states, could be introduced alongside a single currency. It could carry personal information and, eventually, could be used as a passport or even as a house key.

British MEPs have contributed to the proposals, to be published in detail next month. John Stevens (C, Thames Valley), who contributed to a report by the European Parliament's monetary affairs sub-committee, said the basic proposal was for the European Central Bank to issue a standard bank card at the same time as the launch of the euro, but that the card could also be turned into an ID card.

"If we had ID cards, the issue of frontier controls would be irrelevant," he said, pointing out that a bank card with built-in ID would also be very useful.

However John Redwood, the former Tory Cabinet minister and leading Eurosceptic, said: "I am strongly against this proposal. This card would not be a positive move for Britain." He added: "It is not right for Europe to take responsibility for other nations' internal affairs. We are an island and we should keep it that way."

Ailsa Lockwood, a spokeswoman for Liberty, said the smartcard would raise issues over whether people would be required to carry it, or effectively be barred from using a range of services and goods if they did not have one.

Government officials immediately poured cold water on the proposal, which is more far-reaching than the plan for a voluntary identity card that the Government has already been shelved. "This will not be supported here," one Whitehall spokesman said.

Mr Stevens said: "We are trying to kick-start the debate and bring it out into the open. We would hope that the report would prompt the European Monetary Institute to show their hand on the subject."

France, Germany, The Netherlands, Spain and Italy are already considering ways of upgrading their citizens' identity documents. Private security companies and banks keen to avoid fraud would promote the card, according to Mr Stevens. "It is not a question of using taxpayers' money." A recent Green Paper on introducing ID cards in Britain put the cost at £600 million.

Left-wing thinkers who took on Thatcherism

BY ANDREW PIERCE

THE Institute for Public Policy Research, which was at the centre of the row with Michael Heseltine yesterday, has never made any secret of its political leanings.

It was set up as an independent charity in 1988 on the orders of Neil Kinnock, the then Labour leader, to try to challenge the intellectual dominance of the free-market think-tanks spawned by the Thatcher years.

The left-leaning intelligentsia had finally bitten back. Its founders were Clive Hollick, the multimillionaire chief executive of MAL, who was made a Labour life peer in 1991, and Baroness Blackstone, the Master of Birbeck College.

Lord Hollick, a generous donor to Labour Party causes, is a director of British Aerospace and owns the *Express* group of newspapers. Lady Blackstone, one of the Labour Party's leading intellectuals, has a frontbench role in the House of Lords. She has been tipped for Cabinet office under Tony Blair.

The left-wing think-tank is unashamedly new Labour

even down to its headquarters in a fashionable corner of Covent Garden. Its funding is provided by wealthy party sympathisers.

The trustees include Robert Gavron, a close friend of Mr Blair, who has been named as a donor to the blind trust that funds the Labour leader's office. He is also the chairman and proprietor of the Folio Society.

John Edmonds, the general secretary of the GMB trade union, who is no longer part of the Labour leader's inner circle, is also a trustee. But he is a powerful force within the trade union movement.

Other trustees include Patricia Hewitt, a Labour Party parliamentary candidate, who was Mr Kinnock's press secretary. Gail Rebeck, chief executive of the publishers Random House, is another close friend of Mr Blair. She is married to Philip Gould, the advertising and polling expert, who is regarded as Labour's answer to Sir Tim Bell.

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, newly elevated to the Lords as a Labour

working peer, was head of the First Division Association of Civil Servants. She is an adviser to Mr Blair and has clashed twice with Michael Heseltine over the alleged politicisation of the Civil Service.

Lord Eatwell, who was made a Labour life peer in 1992, was an economics adviser to Mr Kinnock when he was party leader. Charles Clarke, who was Mr Kinnock's chief of staff and is now a parliamentary candidate, is another leading light.

Lord Donoghue was the chief of staff at Downing Street in the last Labour government.

Jeremy Isaacs, the former general manager of the Royal Opera House, who is a noted Labour sympathiser, is another trustee along with Alan Jinkinson, the general secretary of Unison, one of the biggest trade unions. Professor David Marquand, who was a founding member of the Social Democratic Party but has since returned to the Labour Party fold, is also a trustee.

Extra test for dangerous new drivers

Drivers who accumulate six penalty points within two years of passing their test will be forced to put back their L-plates and take it again from June. The idea has been law since 1995, but the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency did not have the funds to administer it until now.

Ministers may expel loyalists from talks

BY NICHOLAS WATT, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

LOYALIST terrorists were warned by the Government yesterday that their political representatives may be expelled from the Stormont talks after a series of bomb attacks on Catholics.

In a marked toughening of its position, the Northern Ireland Office said that recent loyalist bombings "inevitably raise questions" about the position of the political parties linked to the terrorists.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, had insisted until yesterday that the loyalist ceasefire remained intact even after terrorists tried to murder two prominent republicans in Belfast and Londonderry.

register their unease about the loyalist ceasefire after terrorists tried to murder a Roman Catholic couple and their baby girl in Larnie, Co Antrim, on Monday. John Shaw, 37, and his girlfriend, Adele Butry, 25, escaped when a bomb exploded under their van.

Ministers will face calls for the Progressive Unionist Party and the Ulster Democratic Party, the political wings of the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association, to be expelled from the Stormont talks when the first plenary session of the year is held on Monday. The British and Irish Governments can expel any party if its members have breached the Mitchell principles of non-violence.

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Doctor quizzed on murder struck off for dishonesty

By GLEN OWEN AND CAROL MIDDLEY

A HEART surgeon who was questioned about the murder of his former flatmate three years ago was struck off yesterday after the General Medical Council heard that he had "wriggled and squirmed and lied" in his personal and professional affairs.

Glenworth Cummings, 34, was suspended from the doctors' register in June 1995 after he was convicted of forging the signature of former classmate and gynaecologist Dr Joan Francisco, 27.

Dr Francisco was the main prosecution witness at his trial at Knightsbridge Crown Court in October 1994 and had rigged herself up with a tape recorder to record his admissions that he had used her name on the mortgage application for a flat in Hampstead, north London, and to try to buy a Jaguar XJS car.

She was found murdered in her north London flat on Boxing Day 1994. She had been strangled with a vacuum cleaner cord.

Her body was found at the bottom of her stairs and her bedroom had been ransacked. It is believed she was killed while packing for a holiday in Los Angeles where she was meeting her sisters.

Mr Cummings was immediately questioned by police. In

a statement not read out at his original trial she had alleged that he had spied on her while she was undressing while they were sharing a house. No body was charged with her murder and Mr Cummings, who was never arrested, was later ruled out as a suspect.

Rosalind Foster, of the GMC, yesterday told the professional conduct committee of Mr Cummings' tangled financial affairs since his conviction. She said that since the committee had suspended him in June 1995, three new irregularities had emerged.

Mr Cummings had claimed he was employed as a cardiologist at the Royal Brompton Hospital and the National Heart and Lung Institute while applying to Selfridges for a credit card, she said. He also gave false addresses and false information about his employment on two credit card applications on October 8 and 19 last year, to Sears Financial Services, she said.

They secured credit for Mr Cummings which otherwise would not have been granted. He also gave false employment details to two medical agencies with whom he was seeking work. Jane Schuck, a placement officer with Medacs Health Care Services, which places locum doctors, told the

hearing she had received a telephone call from Mr Cummings saying he was ready for work even though he was still suspended.

Miss Foster said he had been "persistently dishonest" adding: "The public deserve to rely on the absolute integrity of doctors. You have a doctor before you who has continued to wriggle, squirm and lie, not only in his personal affairs but also in relation to his professional practice."

The conduct committee ordered his name be removed from the register after finding him guilty of making dishonest statements. He has 28 days to appeal.

The committee found him guilty of dishonesty with regard to the Selfridges credit card and the phone call to the locum agency earlier this year, claiming that he had worked at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, for a period of time.

It also found that he had misled the committee over whether he had signed a cheque for nearly £17,000 to a loan company in respect of the proposed purchase of the Jaguar car.

Miss Foster outlined Mr Cummings' debts. She said he still owed £104,000 on the mortgage and £14,000 on the Jaguar car, along with a £4,000 overdraft at Lloyds Bank and £4,300 in legal fees for his failed appeal against his suspension.

Despite this, she said, he had recently bought a watch worth nearly £2,000.

Questioned on his "expensive tastes" Mr Cummings said: "How much you pay for a watch depends how long you want it to last."

At the hearing Mr Cummings conceded he had been foolish. "I accept that I have rather made a mess of things," he said, adding that he realised the seriousness of his position. "One does not come to a committee like this without reflecting on the sequence of events that has brought one here. I realise that my career is in jeopardy."

He made no comment as he left the hearing.



Dr Joan Francisco was found dead after giving evidence against surgeon Glenworth Cummings



Brink of danger: father and son talk on the Tamar Bridge. Police did not know the father had arrived until they saw a middle-aged man edging his way along

Father risks life on ledge to talk son out of suicide

By JOANNA BALE

A FATHER risked his life by walking along a slippery girder 138ft above a river yesterday to stop his suicidal son from jumping. The drama ended as the two men hugged.

Police negotiators had tried without success for two hours to persuade the 26-year-old son to climb back to safety from the foot-wide ledge on the Tamar Bridge at Saltash, Cornwall. The depressed man was taunted with cries of "Jump" from onlookers and passing drivers.

Officers had not dared to venture on to the ledge because it was so slippery from the rain. The 53-year-old father arrived and immediately climbed out to the rescue without consulting the police. The two spoke, then hugged and climbed to safety.

The bridge is so notorious for suicide attempts that the Samaritans are hoping to put up an advertisement at either end. In the past five years, ten people have jumped off and eight have been killed.

Acting Sergeant David Cartwright of Saltash police praised the courage of the father, who is not being named to protect the identity of his son. Sgt Cartwright said: "This was a very difficult situation because the man was perched on a very narrow, slippery ledge with his legs hanging over."

"He was in an extremely agitated state and refused to speak to us for quite a while. We tried to build up some kind of rapport but he was not communicative and it did not help that a crowd gathered below and some passing drivers wound down their windows and shouted 'Jump!'."

"We were trying to calm the lad down but he was right on the edge. He was not mentally ill but he had personal difficulties which he had not been able to talk to anyone about. It seems he had the type of problems which a lot of young people have today — no job, no prospects, and no girlfriend."

"The conditions were against us. It was very windy and very cold. Even when the lad turned round to talk to us,



Alive: helped back to reach safety

we could barely hear what he was saying. We were up there for almost two hours.

"We tried to gain his confidence and eventually he gave his name and we managed to fetch some family friends. Somehow his father heard about what was going on but we did not realise he had arrived until we saw this man shuffling along the girder."

"None of us had gone down there. The lad was in such a state that if we had climbed over, he would probably have jumped and the ledge was also extremely narrow and slippery because it was drizzling."

"It was very brave of the father to go down there and we were very worried about his safety. One slip and both of them could have fallen to their deaths."

"He was trying to get his son to hold his hand and then he hugged him and within minutes they both climbed back to safety. The father was so worried about his son's safety that I don't think he gave a second thought to his own."

Grobbelaar's friend sought to destroy him

By LIN JENKINS

THE man who made allegations that Premiership football matches had been fixed admitted yesterday that he turned on his friend Bruce Grobbelaar and set out to destroy him after their business collapsed.

Christopher Vincent also admitted that he stood to make a fortune if any of the three footballers on trial for allegedly rigging results was convicted of the crime. Mr Vincent, a chief witness in the trial at Winchester Crown Court, will net at least £76,000 from a book deal with the publishers Macmillan and about £100,000 from a television company if the goal-keeper, John Fashanu, or Hans Segers are found guilty.

The contract for *Betrayal of Trust: The Inside Story of the Biggest Scandal in Sporting History* includes a clause making payment and publication dependent upon the sentencing of those convicted.

Mr Vincent, who was declared bankrupt with debts of £98,820 in March 1995, has also entered a deal with Samuel Kersh, an agent, to sell serial rights and handle potential film and television deals.

Rodney Klevan, QC, for Mr Grobbelaar, said to him: "It is in your interest to try and

secure a conviction against one or more of these men."

He asked Mr Vincent: "It is payment by results, isn't it?" Mr Vincent replied: "Yes sir."

Mr Vincent had a series of business failures to his name. Three companies had ceased trading before he set up Mondoro Ltd to provide holidays to his native Zimbabwe and recruited his countryman Mr Grobbelaar as an investor.

Mr Vincent, who was paid £35,000 for selling his story to *The Sun* and hiring Mr Grobbelaar into agreeing to act for a fictitious ring of gamblers from the Far East, lived off the £65,000 which Mr Grobbelaar invested in the company.

Mr Klevan said that, after the failure of the venture, "you turned like a viper on him."

Mr Vincent: "That's correct."

Mr Klevan: "Because there was money still to be made?"

Mr Vincent: "That was not the reason."

Mr Klevan: "Mr Vincent — you will destroy your friend by lies, not by truth, as long as you can make your money."

Mr Vincent: "That is not true."

Mr Klevan: "It is true you seek to destroy him."

Mr Vincent: "Yes sir."

The hearing continues.

Put me back in prison, says man bored with bail

By BILL FROST

A FIREMAN released from jail on bail pending an appeal became bored with life on the outside, knocked on Brixton prison's front door and begged to be allowed back. A cell was found for him but five days later officials discovered that they had no right to hold the man.

Let to freedom once more, David Watson, who is appealing against a threatening behaviour conviction, decided to ask his lawyers to help him to be locked up legally. Southwark Crown Court in south-east London was told.

Abidul Khatib, his counsel, explained: "He became aware he was suspended from his work and instead of wasting away his time without doing anything he felt the best thing to do was to serve the remainder of his sentence."

Martin Latiffe, for the Crown, who said he had never come across such a case before, told Judge Jackson that Watson was now making a formal application for his bail to be rescinded. Watson was found guilty at Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court of threatening behaviour at a nightclub and jailed for three weeks just before Christmas. He gave notice of appeal

and six days later was granted bail. But the fireman decided that life on the inside was better than on the outside and duly returned for a further spell of bed and board at Her Majesty's Prison.

However, after passing several apparently contented days behind bars, Watson, whose appeal is due to be heard next month, was told he had to go. "Someone realised they had no right to keep him because he was effectively still on bail. It had not been rescinded and he had not breached it," Mr Latiffe said.

As if being thrown out of prison was not bad enough for him, it has since emerged that his voluntary return to Brixton was wasted "porridge" and could not count as part of his sentence if he lost his appeal.

The judge, refusing to rescind Watson's bail, said: "You can't have somebody volunteering to go to prison in circumstances where he has a live appeal... that is an odd combination."

He could not allow Watson's plea "simply because he wants to do something with the spare time he has got at the moment."

Watson, from Mitcham, Surrey, then once again reluctantly walked to freedom.

Male motorists begin to admit that the driver in front is a woman

By JONATHAN PLYNN
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

WOMEN drivers have earned the respect of all but the most die-hard chauvinists. Since 1988 the proportion of men claiming that they are better drivers than women has fallen from 35 per cent to 24 per cent last year, according to the ninth annual Lcx report on motoring.

Over the same period the proportion of women who believe they are better drivers than men has risen from 45 per cent to 54 per cent. Overall, 51 per cent of motorists now think women are superior motorists, compared with just 8 per cent nine years ago. About 40 per cent of

British drivers are now women. "Perhaps more male drivers should learn from their female counterparts who have fewer accidents and a more responsible driving attitude on our roads," Sir Trevor China, the chairman of Lcx Services, said.

Overall, the survey of 1,209 drivers found that a third believe that driving standards in Britain are bad or very bad, although three quarters rate themselves as good drivers or better. Only one motorist in 100 rates their own driving as poor.

Seven out of ten drivers admit to at least one case of poor driving in the past year. The figure was far higher among

men and the young than among women and the elderly.

Incidents of "road rage" are also multiplying, the survey reveals. An estimated 275,000 people a year have their cars deliberately hit by other road users and about 130,000 a year are physically attacked. Almost three quarters of drivers confessed to feelings of abuse or gestured at another driver.

The report also found that "more speed cameras with fines if more than 20mph over the limit" would be the measure most likely to improve driving, with nearly a half of regular speeders saying they would slow down.

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SATURDAY
IN THE TIMES



BRAGG ON AMERICA

Melvyn Bragg on the end of a special relationship in Weekend

GREEK DELIGHTS

Four-page travel special on the best of Greece in Weekend

Howard may accept compromise to salvage Police Bill

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

MICHAEL HOWARD is considering a compromise to ensure that the Police Bill gets through the Commons after the Lords voted against his plans for the bugging of suspected criminals' homes. The Home Secretary is expected to table amendments that go close to accepting Labour's demand that chief constables get approval from special commissioners before surveillance operations go ahead, rather than after. However, he wants to make it clear that the police will still be able to go ahead without approval in emergencies. Labour says its amendment, passed by the Lords on Monday night, already makes that provision, but Mr Howard seems certain to insist on greater clarity. He is also likely to reject the Liberal Democrats' call for circuit

judges, rather than judicial commissioners, to give approval. Mr Howard spoke on the telephone yesterday to Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, about ways of taking the Bill forward. Mr Straw, who is expected to have further talks with Mr Howard, declined to disclose details of the conversation. However, he said: "I believe that, provided the Government accepts the spirit of the amendment from Labour, which was approved by such a large majority in the Lords yesterday, cross-party understanding will be possible." Labour sources claim that the front bench tabled its amendment in the Lords in the knowledge that chief constables have said privately that they could live with the proposal for authorisation by

commissioners. Twenty-nine Tories and ten past and present law lords, among them Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, were among the 209 peers who voted for the Labour amendment. They then backed the Liberal Democrat call for authorisation from a circuit judge rather than a judicial commissioner. In the Commons yesterday, John Major said the changes made by the Lords were "unsatisfactory"; the Labour and Liberal Democrat amendments were "contradictory". But he added that Mr Howard would reflect on the views expressed, and added that intensive surveillance could only be used in investigating serious crime when no other method was possible.

Letters, page 17



Michael Howard talked on the telephone yesterday with Jack Straw about taking the Police Bill forward

Hundreds of transcript notebooks lost

By STEWART TENDLER

THE national criminal intelligence centre is to tighten controls on police telephone tapping records after 900 notebooks with details of sensitive transcripts went missing. Albert Pacey, director-general of the National Criminal Intelligence Service, admitted yesterday that the notebooks should have been destroyed but denied corruption had taken place or investigations were harmed. The notebooks vanished between 1985 and 1995. Under police rules, detectives make

notes of transcripts at a centre for replaying tapes. Their notebooks are booked out in a ledger and once a case is over the notebooks are destroyed. But Mr Pacey said missing files started to come to light when police, in 1995, discovered John Donald, a London drugs squad officer, had some notebooks. An inquiry was ordered to uncover lost notebooks. A year-long national hunt by a team of detectives led by John Stevens, an Inspector of Constabulary, accounted for the vast majority of books. The inquiry cost up to £1 million. Mr Stevens's inquiry

found hundreds of blanks in the ledgers. The notebooks were supposed to be used only by senior officers but junior officers had gained access. His officers interviewed 396 current and former detectives and found notebooks left in offices, garages and homes. Mr Pacey said scores of recommendations in a confidential report by Mr Stevens had been taken up by the National Criminal Intelligence Service. Mr Donald and a retired officer who was officially in charge of the notebooks were reported to the Crown Prosecution Service but no prosecution is to take place.

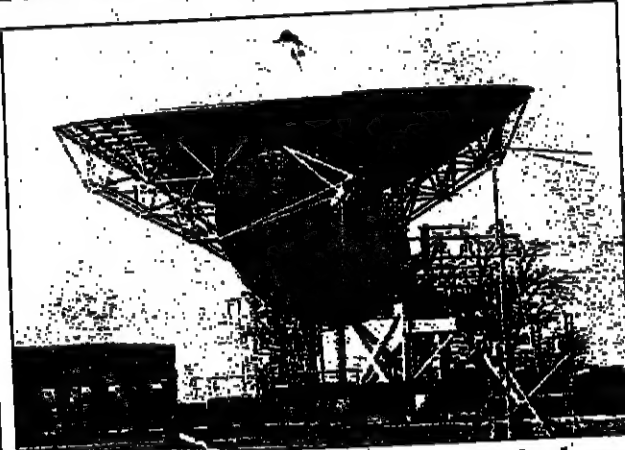
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the latest round
of BT price cuts.

International calls cut between 10% & 37%

Five minute international call to	Time of day	Before Feb 19th	From Feb 19th	Percentage reduction	Price with Friends & Family and PremierLine
Sweden	Daytime	£2.28	£1.43	37%	£1.07
	Evening	£1.93	£1.34	30%	£1.00
	Weekend	£1.80	£1.17	35%	87.6p
USA/Canada	Daytime	£1.49	£1.19	20%	88.6p
	Evening	£1.41	£1.13	20%	84.2p
	Weekend	£1.31	£1.05	20%	78.2p
France/Germany	Daytime	£1.78	£1.43	20%	£1.07
	Evening	£1.49	£1.34	10%	£1.00
	Weekend	£1.30	£1.17	10%	87.6p
Australia/New Zealand	Daytime	£2.73	£2.45	10%	£1.84
	Evening	£2.33	£2.10	10%	£1.58
	Weekend	£2.21	£1.99	10%	£1.49
Nigeria	Daytime	£6.56	£5.26	20%	£3.94
	Evening	£5.53	£4.95	10%	£3.72
	Weekend	£4.95	£4.45	10%	£3.34
Israel	Daytime	£5.68	£3.98	30%	£2.98
	Evening	£4.59	£3.67	20%	£2.76
	Weekend	£4.25	£3.38	20%	£2.54

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The secret signals intelligence centre at Cheltenham

GCHQ signals readiness to help overcome organised crime

Security sources say the technological resources of the Government's signals intelligence centre can be used to monitor major criminals. Michael Evans reports

THE Government's secret signals intelligence centre is ready to play a decisive role in combating organised crime, security sources said yesterday.

The part played by Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), based in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, in helping police, Customs and the security agencies to tackle serious crime is seldom recorded. However, as the Government struggled yesterday to win Opposition support for its Police Bill, aimed at giving the police powers to "bug and bungle" suspected organised criminals without the need for prior judicial authorisation, sources said its huge technological resources were available to assist law enforcement agencies.

GCHQ's principal function is to provide signals intelligence support for military operations. It played a crucial role in assisting British military commanders in the Gulf War and, currently, in the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where more than 5,000 British soldiers are serving. Although GCHQ is constrained by the tasking requirements set by the Cabinet Office's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), it is permitted under the 1994 Intelligence Services Act to deal with organised crime, especially where international criminal godfathers with transnational operations threaten the security of this country.

The security sources said that while GCHQ was principally involved in "outward" (overseas) eavesdropping operations, it had the capability and the authorisation to listen "inwards" when its major customers, such as the police and Customs, sought its help in monitoring the activities of criminals.

One senior security source said: "This is still only a small proportion of GCHQ's work, which is mainly aimed at overseas, but it has the technological skills that could make a difference in tackling organised crime."

The JIC, whose membership includes David Omand, the new director of GCHQ who took over in July, has not yet ordered the eavesdropping

centre to increase monitoring operations against organised criminals.

However, organised crime is now regarded as one of the growing threats to the security of this country which will increasingly involve every law enforcement and security agency. MIS, now has officers attached to the National Criminal Intelligence Service who are empowered, under the 1996 Security Service Act, to tackle organised crime where it affects national security.

Under Mr Omand, formerly a senior official at the Ministry of Defence, GCHQ has acquired a sharper and more Whitehall-attuned reputation. After dealing with ministers for so long as an MoD official, Mr Omand is aware of ministerial sensitivities and has emphasised to his staff of specialist scientists and engineers the importance of being flexible in the new post-Cold War era.

Under the Intelligence Services Act, GCHQ can be authorised by the Secretary of State to eavesdrop on criminals involved in organised crime that threatens the security of the state. Although GCHQ comes under the political aegis of the Foreign Secretary, one security source said: "Secretaries of state are indivisible."

In other words, requests for GCHQ assistance could come from the Home Office or other Government departments, who would merely be expected to liaise with the Foreign Secretary before authorisation is given.

GCHQ is spending a large proportion of its estimated £500 million annual budget on computer equipment to keep pace with the rapid advances in communication technology. Digital mobile phones, used by organised criminals and terrorist organisations, have presented a major but not insurmountable challenge.

The Cheltenham centre is also embarking on a comprehensive reorganisation. Under the previous director, Sir John Adye, now retired, moves were made to reduce the workforce of about 6,000 — including outlying stations at home and abroad — to 4,500 by the end of the century.

Prawn-flavoured carrots will put better health on menu

TYRANTS in their cots who have half the family dancing a jig in an attempt to get them to go to sleep, are no more amenable when they sit at the dinner table. Recent studies by the Cancer Research Campaign show that parents are defeated by their young children when it comes to getting them to eat vegetables.

Children not only win the battle of the greens when they are toddlers, but the entire war, as they are no more likely to eat their vegetables when they go to school than when they were in their high chair. All too commonly doc-

tor's witness an overwrought mother trying to coax or bully a fearful child into eating boring, sometimes even disgusting, helpings of vegetables.

The immediate thought is that few adults would have eaten them either and that no self-respecting chef would have dreamt of serving them in a restaurant.

Children's tastes may be unschooled and undeveloped but they can tell the difference between tired, old, hard, peas and sweet, fresh peas, cooked with a little sugar and butter and served

as their parents would expect. Potatoes mashed with a trace of skimmed milk do not compare with those laced with butter or cream.

So determined are modern mothers not to provide any excess fat with their children's diet that they make nourishing food inedible, when in fact it is necessary to bring out the taste of food and to provide lubrication so that it may be swallowed easily.

The cancer campaign is concerned because there is increasing evidence of a close link between the anti-oxidant



Dr Thomas Stuttard

powers of fresh vegetables and a reduction in the incidence of cancers, yet the intake of vegetables is low in many parts of Britain.

Gordon McVie, director general of the Cancer Research Campaign, has said

that it is likely that a diet rich in vegetables and fruit cuts the number of cases of cancer of the colon by a third and may well influence the number of stomach and lung cancer cases. It has even been suggested that tomatoes may

protect against cancer of the prostate. The dietary habits inculcated in childhood can last a lifetime. If children are allowed to subsist on junk foods, they will miss out then and in later life on the anti-carcinogenic antioxidants contained in vitamins C and E, beta carotene and folic acid, as well as in all the carotenoids.

Professor McVie has one other message to parents and school caterers. Frozen vegetables are much more health-giving than those which have languished at the green-

ers for days. Keeping greens for three days reduces their vitamin C content by half. To achieve the maximum health benefit, vegetables should be cooked straight from the garden or freezer.

Professor McVie is so concerned that children no longer enjoy vegetables that he has asked Malcolm Walker, the chairman and chief executive of Iceland Group, to undertake research to find flavourings that could make the broccoli or cauliflower more tasty.

Professor McVie reasons that if a cheese and onion

flavour can be added to crisps, why not similar or other flavours to boring vegetables? Carrots could easily be made to taste of prawn cocktails and cauliflowers of roast beef and mustard.

Mr Walker initially had his doubts but then remembered that mint-flavoured peas are one of Iceland's bestselling lines. He has agreed to co-operate and hopes to have the first of Professor McVie's flavoured range of vegetables ready for trial within a week or two.

Leading article, page 17

Telephone codes to switch again after exchange fails

By DANIEL MCGORRY

EIGHT million telephone users were told yesterday that they would need new numbers, barely two years after being promised that they would never have to change again.

London and other cities are already running out of numbers. Ofcom, the telephone regulator, said that the new codes would be introduced during 1999 and run in tandem with existing numbers for at least a year. Ofcom says the change will produce eight billion new numbers, meeting demand until at least 2015.

Seven million subscribers in London will be among the first to change. Business leaders yesterday complained that the cost and upheaval would come so soon after the switch to the 01 prefix, on "PhONEday" in 1995. Industry leaders estimate that it could cost £3 billion in printing, stationery, and reprogramming computers. The Telephone Users Association said: "Somebody did not do their homework properly so we face more disruption, and the numbers just get longer." Bill Mieran, the association's chairman, said: "We trust this change lasts a long while and we don't hear more excuses in a couple of years."

Labour called for the suspension of Don Cruickshank, Ofcom's Director General, pending an inquiry by the Commons Trade and Industry Committee into what it called a renumbering shambles. To

RINGING THE CHANGES

New telephone codes will be introduced in 1999 and run in parallel with existing numbers for at least a year.

London will be reunited by popular demand under one code, 020. But the 0171 and 0181 prefixes, which Ofcom says will have no further capacity in three years, will still feature as all London numbers become eight-digit. So 0171-634 8700 changes to 020-7634 8700, and 0181-295 2100 becomes 020-8295 2100. Those in London will not have to dial 020.

Northern Ireland changes to an 028 code, with two or three digits added to the current number so 01232 92622 becomes 028-90 92622 and 01625 34567 will become 028-850 34567. The Province asked for a unified code.

Cardiff becomes 029 with the prefix 20 also added to the current number: 01222 92622 becomes 029-20 92622. There is also an option for an all-Wales code.

Portsmouth and Southampton will have 023, followed by 92 for Portsmouth and 80 for Southampton. Thus Portsmouth numbers will change from 01705 92622 to become 023-92-92622 and Southampton numbers such as 01703 92622 will become 023-80 92622.

Ofcom is reserving 05 for corporate numbers, allowing businesses to adopt a single number for branches across the country.

By 2001, mobile phones and pagers will all be bracketed under 07 so callers will know they will be paying a higher rate.

his embarrassment, Mr Cruickshank was reminded of his remarks in 1995 when he introduced the 01 prefix: "You will not have to change your number again in your lifetime."

Ofcom officials tried to explain that "things have changed since then. Users weren't happy with our last proposals so we had to change again to create more numbers."

Yesterday Mr Cruickshank said: "Of course it looks messy. I have learned over my four years in this job that

numbering is a lot more complicated than I thought."

He insisted that the change followed an "exhaustive three-month consultation process" with industry, local authorities, MPs and consumer groups. The change was designed to be "future-proof". He said that BT, which had begun changing numbers ten years ago, had done nothing wrong technically but should have "consulted and communicated more".

"This is the final stage of something that was started in

the late Eighties," Mr Cruickshank said. "We had to release 01 in 1990 from London numbers, and then used 01 in 1995 to put all the geographical numbers in the country behind it."

Nigel Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, said that Ofcom had ignored warnings during "the 01 switch" that this would not create enough new numbers for fax and Internet lines and that there would have to be another expensive upheaval. He said Ofcom should pay for any changes.

BT said that it had seen the final proposals only yesterday and that "Ofcom's forecasting was not what it should have been", adding: "Customers need to know this will definitely be the last change."

The London Chamber of Commerce was "annoyed and dismayed" by yet more disruption. Simon Sperry, its chief executive, said: "This shows that PhONEday was nothing more than a stop-gap. With more foresight, these second changes in 18 months could have been avoided."

The Consumers' Association is calling for good publicity about the new numbers, and assurances that they will last well into the next century.

Mercury — the country's second-largest phone provider — supported Ofcom's proposals. The Telecommunications Managers' Association "congratulated" Ofcom on "developing a stable framework for the future".



A classic Chanel embroidered white jacket, matching gloves and long black skirt

Lagerfeld holds the classic line at Chanel

By HEATH BROWN

AFTER two days of Parisian fireworks from the British designers Alexander McQueen and John Galiano, with their elaborate couture presentations for Givenchy and Dior, Chanel's traditional salon show at the Ritz Hotel was refreshingly sedate.

The timeless setting was the perfect location for the classic creations of Chanel's haute couture collection. Karl Lagerfeld, chief designer at Chanel, knows his customers well and gives them exactly what they want: vintage Chanel.

Palazzo trousers and white organza shirts started the show off in classic Riviera fashion. Early 1930s styles true to the original spirit of Coco Chanel appeared in signature collarless tweed jackets, simple separates, finely beaded empire-line dresses and picture hats.

Large feather ballroom skirts, a pink marabout lounge suit and feather-on-a-stick headbands by the top British milliner Philip Treacy provided notes of drama in a show that otherwise epitomised the simple chic expected from Lagerfeld and Chanel.

Kiki Feraud, daughter of Louis Feraud, the retired French designer, took off in the opposite direction, fastening gold hardware bits on African motif crepes and rows of brass buttons on a blue belted jumpsuit.

Late-night radio DJ to take over Evans hot seat

By PETER BARNARD AND ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE appointment of the disc jockey Simon Mayo, who is standing in for Evans, Evans announced last week that he would be leaving the show at the end of March because Matthew Bannister, Radio 1's Controller, refused to allow him to work a four-day week. When Evans failed to turn up for work on Monday, the BBC agreed to release him from his contract immediately.

Radcliffe, 38, whose eclectic musical taste has earned him the label of "the new John Peel", worked with Evans at Piccadilly Radio, a Manchester commercial station, and the two men are friends. Radcliffe is said to have once saved Evans from disciplinary action at the station when he interceded with the management when Evans accidentally wiped the tape of an interview with Bob Geldof after Live Aid.

For three years Radcliffe has presented a two-hour show on Radio 1 at 10pm four nights a week. Although he currently gets Fridays off he is

expected to front the breakfast show five days a week. Radcliffe also presented Channel 4's music show *The White Room*, which is highly regarded for having the maximum of music and minimum of chat. Evans presents *TFI Friday* on Channel 4, the commitment which precipitated his request to Radio 1 to take Fridays off.

Radcliffe's appointment will herald a reshuffle at the station, allowing Peel to return to presenting a mid-week show for the first time in three years. Jo Wiley is expected to take over the lunchtime slot from Nicky Campbell, and Dave Pearce will present the drive-time show.



Radcliffe will present show from Manchester

Footballing chef wins the double

By ROBIN YOUNG

GLASGOW Rangers' loss is the restaurant trade's gain. Catering's fastest rising star was originally destined for a midfield career with the Scottish champions.

In a new edition of the red *Michelin Guide to Hotels and Restaurants*, published today, the most significant changes are the second star won by Gordon Ramsay for the Aubergine Restaurant in Fulham, west London, and a first for the L'Orangerie, southwest London.

After leaving full-time education, Mr Ramsay had a professional contract with Glasgow Rangers, and played for the first team on a couple of occasions. He decided to opt for a career in catering instead.

This is the only new two-star award in the new edition of the *Michelin Guide*. There are a total of nine new one-star awards.

Yesterday Mr Ramsay's staff at Aubergine said that he was "over the moon".

EU helps Scots lift kilt-making skills

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A SCHEME to teach Scots how to make kilts, a garment many would argue was originally designed by an Englishman, is being funded by the European Union.

The Keith Kilt School in the town of Keith in Moray, the only kilt school in Scot-

land, has received about £200,000 from the European Union, which will be matched by the local council and enterprise body.

Students who complete the year-long course will qualify for the first diploma in kilt-making from the Scottish

Vocational Education Council. An industry-wide Scottish National qualification in kilt-making is planned.

The school was the idea of master kilt-maker Robert McBain, who set it up when the traditional woollen industry was hit by the closure of several mills. Mr McBain, a former Gordon Highlander who taught kilt-making to the regiment's soldiers, says he has had an enormous amount of interest in the school, some of it from America.

He said much of the skill in making a kilt was in the marking and cutting. "There are about 3,000 tartans on the market all with different widths and set sizes and all presenting their own problems for kilt-makers."

David Sykes, of Moray council, who has been closely

involved in the project, said it became apparent that while the market for hand-made kilts was growing, there were fewer people who knew how to make them.

The origin of the kilt is a contentious issue. The word kilt was first used in the 18th century. In Gaelic the word is *feileadh*, with *feileadh mor* describing an untailored plaid wrapped around the body and *feileadh beg* describing the tailored version from waist to knee.

The *Edinburgh Magazine* of March 1785 claimed that the kilt was invented by Thomas Rawlinson, an English Quaker who ran a smelting works in Scotland. He is said to have persuaded his workforce to dispense with the upper part of the *feileadh mor* in favour of the less cumbersome short kilt.

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£10m child abuse inquiry to question 180 alleged victims

By RUSSELL JENKINS

CHILDREN living in care homes in North Wales during the 1970s and 1980s were subjected to physical and sexual abuse "bordering on wholesale exploitation", a public inquiry was told yesterday.

At least ten of the alleged victims have since died. Most were known to have killed themselves because they could not bear to live with the consequences of the abuse they suffered from people entrusted with their care.

Up to 180 alleged victims are due to give evidence to the North Wales Tribunal of Inquiry which began its investigations into the "seemingly endless series of allegations" of abuse of children emanating from a small number of homes. Numerous complaints involve two homes in Wrexham, Bryn Esryn, run by the council, and the privately-run Bryn Alyn. Peter Howarth, deputy head of Bryn Esryn, was jailed for ten years in July 1994 for sexual assaulting eight boys.

The tribunal, held in former council offices in Ewloe, Flintshire, and chaired by Sir Ronald Waterhouse, a former High Court judge, is expected to last a year and cost up to £10 million.

Gerard Elias, QC, counsel for the tribunal, said members were determined to uncover the truth and promised to find

out whether more could have been done by the local authorities, the North Wales Police or the Welsh Office to prevent the abuse or detect it earlier.

William Hague, the Welsh Secretary, announced the inquiry last June at the personal insistence of the Prime Minister after persistent rumours that the homes had been in the grip of a national paedophile ring, whose activities were linked to public figures.

Investigations by North Wales Police resulted in eight prosecutions and six convictions for criminal offences. There were numerous internal inquiries, culminating in the 300-page Jellings report commissioned by Clwyd County Council. But that still failed to dispel the "utmost disquiet".

Mr Elias said that in this climate truth had been allowed to coexist with rumour and innuendo. The tribunal will determine whether there was any evidence of a "greater organisation or infiltration by those with a determination to exploit vulnerable children in care".

He said: "The overwhelming response by the tribunal interview team has been that complaining was not a real option. It brought no relief but risked yet worse treatment." He said questions will be asked over whether the level of funding from government and

local authorities played a role in the quality of care.

Mr Elias added: "If, as a whole, or in substantial part, they [alleged victims] are accepted by the tribunal, then it may be that they will compel the conclusion that children in care in Clwyd and Gwynedd during the period under review were abused physically and sexually on a scale that borders on wholesale exploitation."

The tribunal was told that, although some files are missing, they have records for 9,500 of the 12,000 children in care during the 20-year period in question. The inquiry has identified 650 complainants.

Mr Elias said it would seem an inescapable conclusion that, should abuse be proved, senior people in the social services were at best careless as to the plight of their charges and, at worst, negligent to the point of gross professional incompetence, or even guilty of deliberately shutting their eyes. Local authorities had often seen the numerous inquiries only as an embarrassing inconvenience.

Sir Ronald made a ruling forbidding identification of either the alleged abusers or the abused, except for those who have been prosecuted and convicted. He said that public exposure could deter potential witnesses.



Gathered from East and West: Portrait of a Young Man by Hals and The Holy Family by Poussin

Masters of the world reunited from the spoils of power and empires

By MARCUS BINNEY

GLITTERING prizes of power have returned to London after more than two centuries of changing hands with the world's fortunes. This time they are on public show.

The collection of Old Masters was amassed by England's first and long-serving Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, in the early 18th century. His descendants sold 181 paintings to the Russian empress Catherine the Great. In the 1920s, Russia's new Communist rulers sold three to America to raise hard currency.

Now Russia, America and Walpole's modern descendants, the Cholmondeley family, have co-operated in an exhibition that reunites some of the pictures at Kenwood House in Hampstead, north London. Parts of the collection were first hung together in the capital when Walpole was given 10 Downing Street to be his residence.

Andrew Moore, the exhibition's curator, acknowledges that suggestions of 18th-century sleaze may be in order over the wealth of the man who held office from 1721 to 1742. Walpole himself had told visitors at the House of Commons that "every man has his price". Mr Moore said: "When he was later impeached, Walpole destroyed large quantities of his papers."

After he fell from power, Walpole took his pictures to his palatial new house, Houghton Hall in Norfolk, where they remained until 1789 when his family made the sale to Russia for the then staggering sum of £40,000 to clear his vast debts.

Art lovers of the time described it as a huge loss to the nation. In the House of Commons, John Wilkes MP, better known as the champion of free speech, pleaded that the collection should be acquired to form a gallery where young British artists could study.

The exhibition entitled *Houghton Hall: The Prime Minister, the Empress and the Heritage*, evokes the splendour of Walpole's patronage and collecting. It involves a rich selection of furniture, sculpture, prints and paintings.



Walpole: hint of sleaze and a legacy of debt

Three spectacular canvases have been brought back from the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg — including *The Holy Family* by Nicholas Poussin — and another three have been brought from the National Gallery of Art in Washington — including

Portrait of a Young Man by Frans Hals. Also on show are paintings that Walpole's descendants acquired to fill the empty wall space at Houghton.

The Hermitage paintings are displayed in richly ornate, gilt Russian frames, inscribed with the names of artists in Latin and Cyrillic letters. Ian Dejardin, Kenwood's senior curator, said: "The Poussin was so heavy, I thought it would pull the house down." Two stout pedestals now help to carry its weight.

The exhibition starts tomorrow and runs until April 20. The Russian press corps were strongly in evidence at the preview. A reporter from *Pravda International* commented: "The director of the Hermitage Museum, Dr Piotrovski, has been unfairly under attack, particularly in Germany, for mounting exhibitions of long-hidden works of art seized from the Nazis. This exhibition shows him for what he really is, a great and generous scholar opening up a new era in loans from the Hermitage."

Scientists lend a hand to swat flies

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE ability of flies to avoid being swatted could prove to be their Achilles' heel, researchers at Sussex University believe.

Flies can react to an approaching hand with stunning speed because of a brain structure called the giant fibre. This ribbon-like cell responds to the threat by rapidly triggering the parts of the brain that activate jumping and flying.

Studies of how it works have raised the possibility of a new kind of insecticide aimed at disabling the fly's instant reactions. Such a flykiller would have the advantage of being harmless to other creatures, including human beings.

The giant fibre is fast because it communicates electrically, rather than through chemical intermediaries as do other brain cells. Current flows through the fibre so quickly that the fly is on the move and out of range before the swat lands.

While a typical human being takes about a quarter of a second before the hand moves in response to something seen by the eye, the fastest insects are moving in a matter of a few thousandths of a second.

Pauline Phelan, of the Sussex Centre for Neuroscience, and her colleagues are studying a strain of fruit fly that is easily swatted. As a result of a genetic defect, these flies cannot make a protein that is apparently responsible for establishing the electrical connections between the giant fibre and other cells in the circuit. The Sussex team aims to prove this by introducing the gene into isolated cells.

Higher animals have similar proteins, but their amino acid sequences are quite different. This indicates that invertebrates and vertebrates may have evolved different ways of producing proteins that perform similar functions.

If so, it may be possible to design pesticides that selectively block the process in insects without having any effects in other creatures, Dr Phelan said. With their escape mechanisms disabled, the flies would be grounded, easy prey for even a gentle swat.

Cash-starved hospitals 'forced to discharge violent mental patients'

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

VIOLENT mentally ill people are being discharged from hospitals as fast as possible to make room for other dangerous patients who are on the streets, the author of a new study has said. The crisis in psychiatric care is worst in London, where nearly half the inquiries into killings by mental patients have been carried out in the past ten years.

The capital needs at least an extra £10 million a year to provide 400 new acute beds

for the seriously mentally ill, the King's Fund, an independent research charity, said.

Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, announced after meeting the report's author, Professor Sir David Goldberg, that he was diverting £30 million to London this year, mainly from shire counties and affluent suburbs. However, it will have to be shared between all parts of the NHS. Professor Goldberg, director of research and develop-

ment at the Institute of Psychiatry, said that it was a "disaster" that no part of London had the desired level of mental health provision. "What the service has done is to concentrate on acute inpatient care of people who are violently disturbed," he said.

"It has to throw people out as soon as it is possible so it can admit the disturbed people who are on the pavement outside. The situation is intolerable."

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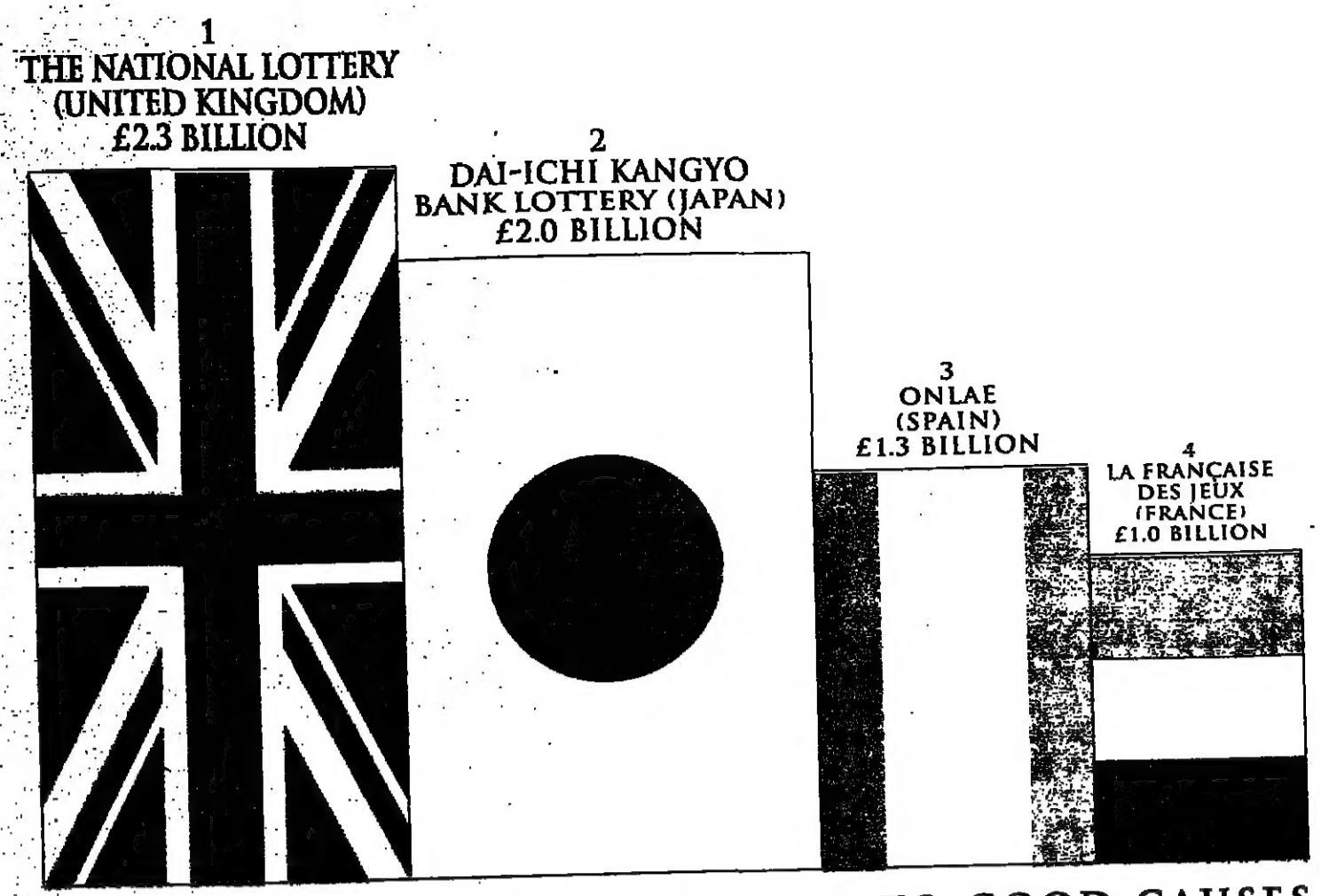
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Last memories of the Titanic go down with oldest survivor



Edith Brown shortly before setting sail on the *Titanic* with her parents; her father, Thomas, drowned

By TIM JONES

THE oldest survivor of the *Titanic* disaster, who celebrated her 100th birthday in October, has died in a nursing home in Southampton, from where the great ship sailed on her maiden voyage in 1912. Edith Haisman was 15 when the *Titanic* struck an iceberg while crossing the Atlantic to America, claiming 1,523 lives. Her abiding memory was of her father, who drowned, standing on deck with a brandy in one hand and a cigar in the other. He waved and shouted: "I'll see you in New York." Mrs Haisman and her mother, Elizabeth Brown, were among those who found a lifeboat.

Mrs Haisman was the last of the survivors able to remember events clearly, the five others being too young at the time. Last year she sailed to the spot where the pride of the White Star Line slipped beneath the waves to lay a wreath in her father's memory. She said: "As we were walking up the gangplank, my father had a presentiment. He turned white. He had some sort of idea that something was going to happen." When the ship struck the iceberg, she said, "at first there was no panic because everybody was so stunned by what had happened. They didn't realise the *Titanic* was sinking. Nobody did. Most of the men jumped overboard into the sea. Those who could swim swam and those who could not swim sank. There was no hope for anyone." Kim Key, Mrs Haisman's



The departure of the *Titanic* from Southampton on her first and final voyage

granddaughter, said yesterday: "She always loved to chat, and on and off would talk about the *Titanic*. She didn't remember it with as much grief in her later

years." She said her grandmother had lived in South Africa with her mother and her father, Thomas Brown, until he decided to move the family to America. "They

came to England to buy linen and cutlery for the hotel they were going to open and they booked the last three, second class berths on the *Titanic* because there were no first-

class cabins left. They didn't bother insuring anything because it was only a four-day trip, so they lost everything." Mrs Haisman returned to South Africa, where she met her husband, Frederick. They married when she was 19 and they were together for 60 years before he died in 1976. She had ten children and is survived by four sons, two daughters and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. One of her daughters, Dorothy Kendle, said that her mother had another close call at sea during the Second World War. She, her children and other passengers were ordered to lifeboat stations while sailing to South Africa. "Everyone there remembers Edith as the calmest person on the ship. She had been through it all before."

Drugs crackdown set off rioting at top security prison

By PAUL WILKINSON

A CRACKDOWN on drug abuse among prisoners probably sparked 12 hours of rioting that caused damage estimated at £500,000 in a top security prison. The rampage in two wings at Full Sutton prison near York ended early yesterday when more than 100 specially-trained prison staff stormed makeshift barriers built by the inmates. One person, a prisoner, was slightly injured. Two wings at the prison were seriously damaged as prisoners wrecked everything apart from their cells, flooding communal areas and lighting small fires. Washing machines and dryers were destroyed, snooker tables

smashed, and furniture and fittings in communal areas and offices ripped out and broken. The disturbances began when several prisoners were moved out last week after minor trouble over drugs in one wing. Yesterday Prison Service staff were putting emergency lighting into the two wings as 146 prisoners were moved to 23 other prisons in England and Wales. One hundred cells at the jail will be unusable for up to three months, at a time when the number of prisoners nationally is predicted to reach 60,000 by March and the service is desperately seeking extra accommodation in pris-

ons and a former holiday camp. Full Sutton, which opened ten years ago, holds some of the country's most dangerous criminals, including IRA and Middle East terrorists, serial killers and drug barons. It is one of the five top security jails in England and Wales. Stan Walpole, chairman of the Prison Officers' Association at the jail, said: "It seems that drugs could well be behind it. Closed-circuit television was installed in the visiting area five months ago and that has cut the quantity getting in, as have the statutory random body searches. People who had built up little empires inside have lost some of their position and they don't like it."

He said he did not know if any IRA prisoners had been involved in the violence "but not much goes on in there without their knowledge and approval".

Richard Tilt, the Director-General of the Prison Service, travelled from London to examine the scene and talk to senior staff. "There was no indication that any trouble was developing, although there is some evidence of pre-planning in that there was communication between the two wings involved prior to the incident," he said. "There was a full-scale riot inside those two wings and a tremendous amount of damage has been done. It is deplorable that this should happen in what is a good, well-run, modern prison."



Prison officers in riot gear entering a damaged area. A hundred cells will be unusable for up to three months



Richard Tilt surveying part of a wing wrecked by rioting inmates at Full Sutton prison. Damage is put at £500,000

day in B wing, shortly after the men had eaten their final meal of the day at 6pm. Some refused to return to their cells to be locked in for the night. A series of minor incidents followed, including tables being turned over and equipment broken. At least one small fire was lit. Then prison officers were threatened and one was pelted with snooker balls. Soon after prisoners in C wing joined in. Ronald Tasker, the Governor, took the decision to evacuate the area before his officers were injured. Reinforcements

from other neighbouring jails and the police were summoned to Full Sutton. Electrical fittings were pulled from the walls and plumbing ripped out, allowing water to flood to a depth of several inches in some places. Windows were smashed, doors — including one large steel-barred gate — were torn from their hinges and anything breakable was broken. Several small fires scorched large areas of the walls and ceiling and a large blaze in an office burnt with such ferocity that a toughened polycarbonate

window melted and ran down the wall. Early yesterday officers equipped with protective clothing including helmets, shields and flame-proof overalls moved first into C wing. It took them more than two hours to dismantle the barricades and then they found that most of the inmates had retreated into the habitable cells. By 3.30am they had all surrendered without a fight. A similar operation in B wing was completed by 6.30am. Almost three years ago Full Sutton was severely criticised

by Judge Stephen Tumbin, then the Chief Inspector of Prisons, who said it was in "total anarchy" and "inmates held the upper hand". Since then a tightening of security inside prisons has returned control to the staff. The jail narrowly averted trouble 14 months ago when a Home Office incentive scheme was introduced. It rewarded prisoners with privileges in return for good behaviour, but many resented having to earn rights such as access to pay phones, which had been freely available.

Mother of missing girl protests innocence

The mother of Zoe Evans has publicly denied that she was involved in the nine-year-old's disappearance in Warminster 11 days ago. Paula Evans, 28, and her husband Miles, 23, were released without charge on Sunday after questioning. Richard Griffiths, Mrs Evans' solicitor, said she "emphatically says she is innocent. She hopes against hope that Zoe is alive."

Conmen clean up

Hundreds of restaurants and hotels have been tricked into sending cheques to an address in Kensington, west London, after receiving letters claiming that their staff had spilled food or wine on customers over Christmas. Dry-cleaning costs of £8 to £12 were demanded.

Expectant Egg

The Islanders of Egg expect to learn within days whether the Heritage Lottery Fund will support their bid to become the new owners of their remote, Hebridean home. Lottery trustees met in London yesterday to consider plans for a community buy-out.

Sculptor chosen

Rachel Whiteread, the sculptor best known for *House*, her cast of an east London terraced house, is to represent Britain at the 47th Venice International Biennale of Art this summer. Her current commissions include a Holocaust memorial for Vienna.

Grave disturbed

A brick vault in a churchyard at Birde, Greater Manchester, has been broken open and the head of a woman left on the footpath. It was reinterred by an undertaker and prayers were said for the deceased and her family, who have been informed.

Gillick libel win

Victoria Gillick won five-figure libel damages at the High Court over a suggestion that she was morally responsible for two girls' suicides through her campaign on under-age sex. The BBC and journalist Susan Pearce said the claim was "unfounded".

Boxing gym KO

A boxing gym over a pub, where Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard, Henry Cooper, Jack Dempsey and Rocky Marciano trained, has shut. Phoenix Inns closed it after finding a buyer for the Thomas à Becket in the Old Kent Road, southeast London.

Goon man dies

Dennis Main Wilson, the radio and television comedy producer behind classics such as *The Cooon Show*, *Hancock's Half Hour*, *The Marty Feldman Show* and *Till Death Us Do Part*, died from cancer in Guildford yesterday, aged 72. *Obituary*, page 19

Assault claim

A 25-year-old British soldier serving with the UN is pressing charges of homosexual assault against a Cypriot barrister in the coastal resort of Ayia Napa. A man aged 32 was detained for questioning after a fight broke out and the soldier was taken to hospital.

Light relief

A power cut failed to stop St Edmund's Players' production of *Treasure Island* at Weymouth, Dorset. At the suggestion of a member of the amateur cast, the show was held up for half an hour while everyone, including the audience, went home for a torch.

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Penny Lane memorabilia for sale

A HAIRDRESSER'S shop in Penny Lane, Liverpool, the street featured in the 1966 Beatles song, is expected to fetch £200,000 at a sale of Beatles memorabilia in Japan. The hand-written lyrics for the Lennon and McCartney song are also estimated to fetch between £30,000 and £50,000. The birthplace of the group's drummer, Ringo Starr, at 9 Madryn Street, is expected to fetch from £5,000 to £10,000. The sale at Tokyo Auction House on March 22 will be relayed by satellite to Bonhams in London and to cable and satellite subscribers of the new Auction Channel. Other items include the custom-made left-handed bass guitar, estimated at up to £150,000, that Sir Paul played during most of his Beatles' career. His original birth certificate, which he recently cited as an example of the "ridiculous" market in Beatles items, is expected to go for about £9,000.

Heseltine incurs Whitehall wrath over league table

By VALERIE ELLIOTT, WHITEHALL EDITOR

MICHAEL HESELTINE is seeking talks with other Cabinet ministers to resolve a Whitehall dispute over his plans to publish a league table of the most poorly performing government agencies. While officials had been happy to go along with league tables for schools and hospitals, they have denounced the Deputy Prime Minister's plan as "unfair and outrageous". The branches of government hived off under their own management, known as Next Steps agencies, set their own targets and measure their own performance. Mr Heseltine wants a table showing their performance to be included in next month's annual review of agencies. Senior officials have tried to win over their departmental ministers against the Cabinet Office plan: one said yesterday that it amounted to "undue interference from the centre" and that the Cabinet Office did not fully understand the agencies' business. "How can you measure the performance of the Coastguard Agency, for example, with the payment of benefits? They are not comparable."

Mr Heseltine has decided to deal with ministers directly and is expected to meet Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, Peter Lilley, the Social Security Minister, and Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary. He is determined that the Cabinet Office should enforce standards and that agencies should be honest, open and accountable. His plans are also seen as an attempt to motivate agencies to improve their performance. The agencies that have failed to meet their own performance targets include the Patent Office and Companies

House, under the Department of Trade and Industry, both of which hold Chartermark awards for service to the public. Under the Home Office, the Prison Service is still not meeting all its targets, although officials believe it is markedly improving.

Mr Lilley is expected to be questioned about the continuing failure of the Child Support Agency to meet its targets, despite the improvements made by Ann Chant, its chief executive.

In some cases there may be genuine reasons for an agency not meeting its targets. Mr Heseltine's view is that the public should know why.

Sir Peter Kemp, the former senior civil servant who devised the Next Steps concept, said last night: "I am rather on Heseltine's side on this one. But if a league table is envisaged it should include the top as well as the bottom."

Spring blooms banish winter blues

By ALAN TOOGOOD
HORTICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE colour and spring-like vigour of the Royal Horticultural Society's first flower show of the year banishes memories of the recent big freeze.

The highlight, and a gold medal winner, is the display of bold drifts of hellebores and miniature hardy cyclamen among yellow and red-flowered yew-hazels and *Cornus mas*, by Ashwood Nurseries of Kingswinford, West Midlands.

Among the hellebores are double-flowered forms of Ashwood Garden Hybrids in shades of pink, purple and white, shown for the first time, and a

garden hybrid not yet named with peach-coloured flowers. Rareties include *Helleborus vesicarius* from Turkey with bell-shaped chocolate and green flowers, and the superb pale pink *H. thibetanus*, a first showing for this Chinese species.

Cyclamen come are being shown by several exhibitors, including the Cyclamen Society of Ewell, Surrey, offering *Pewter Leaf*, which is different from most forms as it has plain grey-green leaves rather than patterned foliage.

Southcombe Gardens, of Kenton, Devon, show what can be achieved in winter. Among beech trees still holding on to their golden-brown leaves, dark green hollies and willows with coloured bark, are clumps of grassy evergreen

perennials such as black-leaved *Ophiopogon planiscapus* Nigrescens, gold *Lucula sylvatica* Hobe, Tatra, and variegated *Carex hachijensis* Evergold and *Acorus gramineus* Ogon. On the theme of winter colour, a collection of almost 20 kinds of shrubby cornus has been staged by the society's Floral B committee.

The highlight among exhibits of tropical plants is a collection of *Lycaete* orchids from Henry Oakley, of Beckenham, southeast London. He is showing his own *Lycaete* Mary, a complex hybrid that comes in various colours including bronze, pale yellow and dusky pink.

The show, at the New Horticultural Hall, Greycoat Street, Westminster, is open today from 10am to 5pm.

Bragg condemns anti-hunt stand as hypocritical

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

THE novelist and television presenter Melvyn Bragg has dismissed Labour's pledge to ban hunting as "sloppy thinking" by people with no understanding of the countryside.

Mr Bragg, a prominent Labour supporter, says there is no evidence that foxes suffer pain in the same way as people do and condemns opposition to country sports as "profoundly hypocritical".

His comments, made during an interview with *The Field* country sports magazine, provoked anger from the Labour Party. He was accused of being "intellectually disreputable" by John McFall, the MP whose Private Members' Bill against hunting was approved by 253 votes to 0 in the Commons in 1995 before being blocked.

But Mr Bragg, who does not hunt, shoot or fish himself, said: "If any one can prove me wrong, I am willing to listen. But to argue that animals feel like us and should be treated in the same way as us is just sloppy thinking."

In his interview Mr Bragg suggests that foxes feel excited rather than afraid when being hunted and that to suppose otherwise is merely sentimental. "There is no evidence that animals have consciousness or memory," he says. "There is evidence that they have pain, but none that they have suffering, so a fox on the run is not suffering or in pain, it is in excitement."

"I do not even think animals have pain as we have pain. I think the whole opposition to country sports is profoundly hypocritical, in the sense that



Bragg says hunted foxes do not suffer

If you believe that what we are giving is pain, then you must apply it to fish, fowl or red herring, to every animal that moves."

Mr Bragg adds: "If I had one real proof that an animal is a sentient being, then I would go along with [the anti-hunting argument], but there is not one."

Mr McFall said: "If he is saying that animals do not suffer, that is intellectually disreputable. If a hunted fox is in a state of excitement, then it is the excitement of an old lady being chased down the street by a gang of thugs."

John Bryant, of the League Against Cruel Sports, said: "It is demonstrably crass and stupid to say animals do not suffer. Any vet or pet owner knows animals feel pain and terror. The fox would not run away if it was not afraid."

John Webster, head of the veterinary school at Bristol

University, said he was in no doubt that a fox could feel fear, albeit of a different kind from that experienced by people.

"The evidence is overwhelming that animals can feel pain and suffering," he said. "That does not necessarily mean that hunting should be banned, because a lot of things in life are cruel, but it is a factor in the equation."

Labour has promised that if it wins the general election it will allow MPs a free vote on whether hunting with hounds should be banned. Legislation would follow a yes vote.

Mr Bragg told *The Field* that he respected the passion and commitment of the anti-hunting lobby. "It is a wonderful cause, and I do not want to run down the people who support it, who are often people whom one admires, whom one has time for, but I think they are mistaken."

Mr Bragg, who was brought up in Cumbria where sheep farmers depend on fell packs to keep foxes down, goes on: "They are not country people. They do not understand about culling. They do not understand the damage a fox can do to a hen coop."

In a logical world, he suggests, people would be campaigning to protect rats rather than foxes. The decision that foxes were cute while rats were vermin reflected an anthropomorphic view of wildlife.

"As we all know from Darwin, physiologically, the three most complicated species on earth are rats, bats and anteaters. Rats are far more complicated and interesting than foxes."



Highland fame: Donnie Munro and members of his successful band Runrig

Rock star to sing Labour's praises on political stage

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A GAELIC rock singer chosen yesterday to contest a Highland seat for Labour says that he does not expect his celebrity status to help him a hit with the voters.

Donnie Munro, 43-year-old lead singer with Runrig, was confirmed as candidate for Ross, Skye and Inverness West with unanimous backing of local party members. At the general election he will fight the sitting Liberal Democrat MP, Charles Kennedy, who is defending a notional majority of 6,505 in the redrawn constituency.

Runrig have a huge following in Scotland, where record sales have been high enough to propel the band into the British charts. At home they played to a crowd of 400,000 in Edinburgh. Mr

Munro, a former rector of Edinburgh University, was born and brought up in Skye and has used the band's popularity to campaign for the abolition of tolls on the Skye Bridge.

However, launching his political career in Dingwall yesterday, he said: "I am not standing here as a celebrity because I am not keen on that type of thing. It would be dishonest of me to say that this won't be useful, but it could also be argued that it could have a detrimental effect because some people will say that I am just a face."

He is not the only famous name who will be seeking political success in Scotland this spring. The Scottish National Party is fielding the Gaelic singer and television entertainer Anne Lorne Gillies in the Western Isles. The Tories have chosen the

Earl of Elgin's son, Adam Bruce, a direct descendant of Robert the Bruce, for North East Fife, and David Campbell-Bannerman, a great-nephew of the Liberal Prime Minister Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, for Glasgow Rutherglen.

According to Professor Bill Miller of Glasgow University's politics department, having a well-known name is unlikely to enhance their prospects. "Donnie Munro may hope to pick up a few hundred votes because of his fame but I doubt it would be as many as a thousand. British voters vote along party lines. They look beyond the personality. Even the policies of individual candidates do not have much effect on the voting habits at a general election. Having said that if a person is popular it is unlikely to them any harm."

Tories seem to be still fighting the last election

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Michael Heseltine sometimes behaves as if Tony Benn were still Industry Secretary, as he was when Labour last formed a government 23 years ago. Mr Heseltine's outburst over yesterday's Institute for Public Policy Research report, *Promoting Prosperity: A Business Agenda for Britain*, was reminiscent of his antics in those long lost days when he once picked up the Commons mace. But it was rather an Archie Rice performance. The world, and the Labour Party, has moved on since Mr Benn sought to implement the party's February 1974 pledge to set up a National Enterprise Board, establish planning agreements with private companies and take over "profitable sections or individual firms" in some industries, particularly "irresponsible multinational companies". And that was after Harold Wilson had earlier succeeded in defeating a left-wing call for the state takeover of the 25 leading companies.

Tony Blair's speech at yesterday's IPPR conference on the report showed how far Labour has moved to be friendly to business. Gone is any hint of 1970s-style interventionism. Instead, the emphasis is on how government can help industry, encourage investment and improve infrastructure and skills.

Yesterday's IPPR report reflects that shift in thinking, a sober, rather mainstream discussion of how to improve Britain's industrial performance. Of course, the IPPR is a centre-left body with close Labour links, but for Mr Heseltine to attack the commission which produced the report on the same grounds risks alienating rather than winning over uncommitted businessmen. It is ridiculous to imply that several members of the commission, such as Sir Christopher Harding of Legal and General and George Simpson of GEC, are Labour stooges. They have been far closer to the Tories.

Of course, many in industry will disagree with the report's support for the minimum wage and, reluctantly, signing the social chapter. Adair Turner of the CBI yesterday expressed reservations on these points while welcoming

the report as "a major contribution to our national policy discussion". Many industrialists are also worried that a Blair government would add to industry's costs by regulations and statutory requirements of various kinds. These are legitimate points for the Tories to make, but they are different in kind and degree from the far more fundamental arguments of 20 years ago.

The Government has a strong record on promoting enterprise and inward investment. But Mr Heseltine's over-the-top response was not only politically misjudged but underlines how hard the Tories are finding it to grapple with the adroit repositioning of Labour by Mr Blair and Gordon Brown. The Tories seem to be refighting the last election. Their claims about £30 billion in Labour spending commitments are wild exaggerations. There are certainly several spending loose ends in Labour policies which would undoubtedly complicate Mr Brown's life as Chancellor but they are on nothing like that scale. The more sensible Tory approach is that adopted by Kenneth Clarke on Monday and John Major yesterday, in questioning whether Labour would be able to hold down spending in face of all the pressures to expand budgets.

Recent Tory attacks have missed the target by lacking credibility. The public may be worried about whether a Labour government would be able to avoid tax increases but it does not believe that Mr Blair and Mr Brown are going to launch a public-spending spree or be hostile to business. Similarly, most businessmen, including some members of the IPPR commission, will probably not change the habits of a lifetime and vote Labour. But they no longer fear a Labour government as threatening their futures and livelihoods as they did in 1974. That in itself is a major achievement for Mr Blair, which Mr Heseltine and Tory propagandists have not yet countered.

PETER RIDDELL

Parties collude to thwart Gorman

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Tory Euro-sceptic Teresa Gorman scored a hollow victory yesterday when MPs allowed through her EU referendum Bill without a vote.

Labour and Tory business managers happily colluded in a move that prevented Euro-sceptics in both parties showing their colours to support Mrs Gorman, MP for Billericay. After she had introduced her Bill her opponents failed to provide replies — MPs who count the votes — for a division, allowing it to go through. The UK Membership of the European Union (Referendum) Bill gained a formal first reading but will proceed no further.

It was widely expected that

she would not have secured as much support as similar earlier backbench moves by the MPs William Cash and Iain Duncan Smith. But that did not prevent the irrepressible Mrs Gorman claiming a triumph last night.

"They were running scared," she said. "I had 58 pledges of support. Their tactics in not appointing tellers showed they had no guts. It was gutlessness. If they had any guts they would have tried to face us down."

Earlier she claimed that government whips had put pressure on her to drop the Bill. But she said that she would not be able to face her Essex constituents in the street



Gorman: accused whips of running scared

if she did so, claiming that her efforts were inspired by them.

However, Sir Edward Heath, who as Prime Minister took Britain into the Common Market, said afterwards: "This was entirely pointless. One thing that has come out of it is that Mrs Gorman and her friends want to come out of Europe altogether, and the country won't stand for that."

Poll puts Hamilton hearing in doubt

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE former Trade Minister Neil Hamilton is likely to escape a public interrogation over the cash-for-questions affair because senior Tory MPs want to avoid a damaging confrontation before the general election.

MPs on the Commons disciplinary committee are preparing to abandon plans to hold a series of hearings into accusations against Mr Hamilton. A detailed report into claims that he accepted gifts is being prepared for MPs by Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. However, delays in drafting the report have created a dilemma for MPs on the Standards and Privileges Committee, who say they are running out of time to hold further hearings on the affair.

Sir Gordon's report, originally expected early this month, is unlikely to reach the committee until the end of next month. The MPs will then have to decide whether to accept it in full or carry out further investigations. Sir Gordon is now taking written and oral evidence over claims that Mr Hamilton accepted gifts, and that the lobbyist Ian Greer paid other MPs to ask questions in the Commons.

Because the Commons will be dissolved almost a month before the election date, MPs on the committee concede that there is little chance of holding a series of public hearings, even if the election is on May 1.

"We must hope that Sir Gordon's report is so detailed and well-prepared that there will be no need for us to carry out any more inquiries," one committee member said. "If we have to call Hamilton, it will only lead to other witnesses having to be called and there simply won't be time."

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons, backbench debates followed this afternoon by trade and industry questions; Finance Bill, committee; backbench debate on family mediation in Scotland; in the Lords, debate on the economic value of the City of London's international work; industrial action; government relations with Cuba.

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Clinton must balance quest for racial harmony with liberalism

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX
IN WASHINGTON

ANALYSIS

PRESIDENT CLINTON made the plea for social harmony the central theme of his inaugural speech on Monday, when he dubbed racial hatred "America's constant curse". Yet his speech, which coincided with the public holiday commemorating Martin Luther King, lacked the credibility of Dr King's dream of a colour-blind society.

The flaw was not in the choice of words or delivery. Mr Clinton has the gift of being able to invoke big themes without sentimentality or

self-consciousness. In the 34 years since Dr King declared "I have a dream", the United States has made huge efforts to weld together its diverse population. Yet that project has lost the optimism that accompanied it three decades ago. Worse, the increasing attempts to force warring citizens to live with each other through legislation or social pressure are felt by many to threaten the liberal principles also at the heart of American ideology. The inauguration took place

against a backdrop of headline-grabbing events that have been seen across the country as particularly resonant of racial conflict. Yesterday, the civil trial on whether O.J. Simpson wrongfully killed his wife finished hearing evidence. Last week, the son of Bill Cosby, the television comedian who is a national hero, was shot dead, allegedly by a white man.

Californian schools are in uproar over the proposal for teaching "Ebonics", a "black" version of English. Meanwhile, Washington DC is pleading with the federal Government to take over manage-

ment of the nation's capital, which is plunging into gang-ridden squalor.

Since Mr Clinton ran for the governorship of Arkansas a decade ago, he has put the racism battle at the heart of his political priorities. In that, he represents to many the New South: economically and politically stronger and, its champions say, more racially tolerant. As Nicholas Lemann argued in *The Washington Post* this week: "Who else could win over whites while telling them that racial discrimination has not ended? Or win over blacks while telling them that all

the problems of black America aren't white people's fault?"

Mr Clinton's inaugural speech did not exaggerate the ambition of the enterprise. No other nation is attempting a comparable social experiment, let alone putting its success at the heart of the national identity. Yet America's attempt to glue together its diverse elements is conflicting with many of the individual freedoms also central to its national identity. The strain surfaced in the presidential election with California's successfully passed proposition to outlaw affirmative action, the practice of giving

minorities special treatment in jobs and public programmes.

More widely, political correctness is a much satirised virtue, but has clearly damaging effects. In trying to give each citizen the right not to be offended, it undermines American liberalism. Richard Bernstein, a *New York Times* journalist, assembled a powerful indictment of the "PC" culture and the teaching of "multiculturalism" in schools in his 1995 book *Dictatorship of virtue*. As he and others have observed, multiculturalism favours people on the basis of their race and sex, and so betrays Dr

King's dream of "a day when my children will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character".

Mr Clinton was right to argue on Monday that America cannot afford to fail in its bid for social harmony. However, it is clear that there is a price for success — the loss of considerable freedom of expression — which many citizens are not willing to pay. Describing a way to reconcile those two principles may have been beyond the scope of Monday's speech, but it is perhaps the most important task that now confronts him.

Gore stakes his claim to inherit presidency

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

WHEN Al Gore skipped on to the stage of the Washington Ball in the early hours of yesterday morning, America's Vice-President was unable to contain his excitement as thousands of Democrats chanted "Gore in 2000".

The ball, one of 14 "dances" with which the \$44 million (£30.5 million) inauguration of President Clinton concluded as the sun rose yesterday, was little more than a political rock concert. It was, however, one of the few occasions during this pageant when Mr Gore was not basking in the reflected glory of the President. Generally robotic, he became unusually animated as he punched the air in a victory salute and danced with his wife, Tipper, and Marion Barry, the Mayor of Washington.

An audience, which became visibly less enthusiastic at the entrance of Mr Clinton only half an hour later, was in rapture as the Gores rocked to the sounds of Meat Loaf. The ageing and slab-like American rock star who had just performed *But Out of Hell*, rushed to greet the Vice-President. When Bill and Hillary Clinton emerged to clasp

the microphone, Meat Loaf retired gracefully and did not even clap as the President began his regular patter.

Enthusiasm for Mr Gore had been matched at every event, from the parade of military and high school bands and floats to the swearing-in at the Capitol.

There, on the steps of Congress, the Vice-President had in fact briefly tasted the ultimate power. The President's own swearing-in was running late and, for five minutes and forty seconds, Mr Gore assumed the mantle of leader of the Western world.

In Washington, of course, the moment was seen as a sign that he would succeed Mr Clinton in the Oval Office in four years' time. Almost no other President in American history has given such a ringing and early endorsement to a chosen successor. While Mr Gore was left with a worthy but low-profile portfolio for much of the first Clinton Administration, the President has swiftly carved out a significant role for his deputy in the coming months.

Early next month he will play host to Viktor Cherno-



President Clinton dances with his wife, Hillary, at one of 15 dances held to mark the start of his second term

myrdin, the Russian Prime Minister, and will visit South Africa later in the month as part of a bilateral commission. When he returns, Mr Gore will address the annual convention in Los Angeles of America's largest union, and a constituency vital for his Democratic nomination in 2000.

The two men, whom the White House claims have developed a fraternal relationship, appear to be practically joined at the hip. The fortunes of Mr Clinton are seen as a barometer for Mr Gore's own ambitions, and with Mr Clinton enjoying his highest poll popularity, the "feelgood" factor

has clearly rubbed off on his deputy.

Mr Gore has remained largely untarnished by the myriad scandals that surround the President. There is still a genuine fear that the next four years could be dominated, not by policy, but by investigations into White-

water, campaign fund-raising and the sexual harassment lawsuit filed against the President by Paula Jones, a former Arkansas employee.

"If that happens," said a White House aide, "I wouldn't be surprised if Gore starts being less loyal than he has been up to now."

Truth stretched as history is made in the USA

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

INAUGURAL addresses are not designed to be pored over by pedants, but in his break review of technological achievements in the United States President Clinton's certainly stretched the rules close to breaking point.

He claimed that Americans "split the atom and explored the heavens; invented the computer and the microchip". Half of these claims are certainly true: Americans — or at least citizens of the United States — did explore the heavens, and the first microchips were produced in California by Intel.

But the atom was first split in Cambridge in 1919 by Ernest Rutherford, a New Zealander by birth. He bombarded nitrogen with alpha particles, producing hydrogen and oxygen.

Perhaps Mr Clinton meant nuclear fission rather than transmutation? In that case, the credit properly goes to two Germans, Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman, and Austrian Lise Meitner, who discovered in 1938 and 1939 that uranium nuclei can be split by neutron bombardment.

It was Meitner's nephew, the Austrian-born Otto Frisch, who coined the term fission and worked out the mass of uranium needed for a bomb — while he was working at Birmingham University.

True, the first controlled splitting of the atom was in the United States; but the man

in charge was an Italian, Enrico Fermi. The bomb itself owed plenty to émigré Europeans working in the United States, although it is often wrongly treated as a purely American achievement.

The computer has an equally tangled history. An Englishman, Charles Babbage, had the idea first in the 19th century, though his machines were mechanical and never completed. During the 1930s Alan Turing, also English, established the theoretical possibility of a "universal computing machine".

The first computers were built in Germany, the United States and Britain. While the American device, ENIAC, was bigger and more powerful than the others, it could not store its own programs. The first computer able to do that was built in Manchester.

President Clinton is not the first to bend technological history to his own advantage. The Soviet Union under Stalin hardly ever acknowledged any inventions but its own, and Baroness Thatcher, when she was Prime Minister, was convinced that genetic engineering had been invented in Britain.

Nobody had the nerve to tell her that she was confusing recombinant DNA technology with another important technique which was indeed invented in Cambridge — by an Argentinian and a German.

Gingrich humbled by ruling on misuse of charity funds

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE House of Representatives last night took the unprecedented step of reprimanding Newt Gingrich, the Speaker, and demanded that he pay a \$300,000 (£180,000) penalty for admitted ethics violations.

The vote makes Mr Ging-

rich the first House leader in American history to have been disciplined by his peers and leaves him severely weakened as a political power on Capitol Hill. Only two weeks ago he became the first Republican re-elected to the Speaker's chair in 68 years.

"No one is above the rules," said Nancy Johnson, the Republican chairman of the committee which has investigated the Gingrich affair for two years.

The reprimand and penalty came after a highly damning report was issued last week by James Cole, the independent counsel. Mr Cole was investigating whether the Speaker had misused charitable donations for political purposes.

According to the report, Mr

Gingrich was said to have shown a "disregard and lack of respect" for the standards of conduct expected of his office. A deal was swiftly struck with lawyers from both sides and the Speaker, hoping to minimise political damage to himself, had already agreed to pay the sum and accept the reprimand in advance of last night's vote.

Controversy has been maintained, however, over how Mr Gingrich plans to pay the fine. His lawyer has said that Mr Gingrich will not make a decision on payment for at least a week, sparking immediate criticism from House Democrats who are demanding that the Speaker reimburse the committee from his own pocket.



SPEAKER'S CORNER

Lalo's view in Mexico's *La Jornada*

Woman arrested over Cosby 'daughter' blackmail sting

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A YOUNG woman has been arrested in New York on suspicion of blackmailing Bill Cosby, the entertainer whose son, Ennis, was killed last week.

Autumn Jackson, 22, allegedly contacted Mr Cosby's lawyers and claimed to be his illegitimate daughter. She is accused of seeking \$40 million (£24 million) to keep quiet.

Miss Jackson, accompanied by José Medina, 51, was arrested by the FBI when she arrived at the Manhattan offices of lawyers representing Mr Cosby, 54. It is alleged that she was lured there by a bogus offer of \$24 million.

The offer was part of a police "sting" which predated the death of Ennis Cosby. Miss Jackson has reportedly

known Mr Cosby for several years and received financial assistance from him towards her educational costs. In court papers Mr Cosby stated that he helped "numerous young people in need of tuition assistance". He denies the woman is his daughter.

Late last year Miss Jackson allegedly contacted Mr Cosby and was paid \$3,000 after she complained that she was "out of money". She allegedly later claimed to have contacted a tabloid newspaper with a view to selling a story about her relationship with the popular television actor. On the day that his son was killed, a fax about the tabloid newspaper development was sent to Mr Cosby by Miss Jackson.

Tony Frost, a Briton who edits the normally merciless *Globe* tabloid, confirmed that he had received an approach from Miss Jackson and Mr Medina on the day before Mr Cosby's son died. Events had since changed matters considerably, and the newspaper is helping federal investigators with their inquiries. After his son was killed, Mr Cosby pleaded with newspapers to drop the story and pour their efforts into finding the killer.

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Joint drive to lure Holy Land tourists after Hebron deal

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority are working together for the first time to capitalise on last week's Hebron agreement to boost tourism to the Holy Land.

Nissan Ilan, an Israeli official, said that tomorrow leading US newspapers would carry a new advertisement urging Americans to visit the Holy Land under the slogan: "Peace — It's a Beautiful Sight." She claimed it was the first such joint initiative.

After Israel made peace with the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1993 and with Jordan a year later, it was expected that increased tourism would be a "peace dividend" for all parties. But hopes were dashed by suicide bombings last spring, which claimed more than 60 lives in Israel, and subsequent fighting between Israeli troops and Palestinian police in which 75 people died.

The joint policy document, signed by the three ministries of tourism, follows last week's pullout of Israeli troops from 80 per cent of Hebron, the West Bank city holy to Jews and Muslims.

"Today Israelis, Jordanians and Palestinians open their arms and their hearts to extend a warm invitation to the American people to visit these lands, which have given birth to so much faith and so

much history," says the message to American tourists, whose visits fell 6 per cent last year compared to 1995.

In addition, the Israeli Tourism Ministry requested its offices overseas "to initiate image-building activities as a continuation of the positive media wave which evolved towards Israel with the sign-

Many people planning a visit are waiting to see how things develop on the ground

ing of the redeployment agreement".

Tourism officials believe that the Hebron deal will usher in a period of reduced political tensions, but say it is too early to tell how this will affect bookings. "It appears that many people who are planning on coming to Israel are waiting to see how things develop on the ground," one said.

According to the Israel Hotel Association, total tourist arrivals, including cruise ship passengers, dropped 8 per cent

to 2.3 million in 1996 compared to the previous year. Arrivals from Britain fell by 5 per cent to 216,000 after a first-quarter increase of 5 per cent. "Tourists are looking for peace, quiet and stability," said Avi Rosenthal, director of the association. "We feel the Hebron agreement will... be a boost for tourism."

Hotel industry officials hope to foster regional tour packages that include Egypt, Jordan, and perhaps eventually Syria and Lebanon if peace deals can be achieved with them as well. Two big tourist events are approaching: the millennium and next year's celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Jewish state.

In a separate development, Ariel Sharon, Israel's National Infrastructure Minister and architect of the 1982 military push into Lebanon, has announced he is masterminding a multibillion-dollar scheme to build a string of islands off Israel's Mediterranean coast for business and tourism.

Private Israeli and international finance will be used for the project, in which each of the islands is estimated to cost \$1 billion (\$602 million). They will be linked to the mainland by bridges.

Letters, page 17



People on a beach watch as bush fires, which killed one person, moved closer yesterday to Melbourne. The fires destroyed up to 30 homes, devastated forest land and led to the closure of the retractable roof at the Australian Open tournament. Tennis, page 46

Greek Cypriots snub peace plan

Nicosia: American efforts to defuse tension in Cyprus were snubbed yesterday when the Greek Cypriots rejected a proposal to ban Greek and Turkish warplanes from flying over the divided island, because to do so they would have to make an agreement with Turkey (Michael Theodorou writes).

As a result, European diplomats expressed concern that Washington may now decide to defer indefinitely an initiative to help to reunite the island. The setback came amid further sabre-rattling by Turkey, which announced it was sending warships to northern Cyprus on Friday in a show of solidarity with the Turkish Cypriots over Greek Cypriot plans to buy Russian anti-aircraft missiles.

Death for troops who fled

Kisangani, Zaïre: A military court sentenced 14 Zaïrean soldiers to death for cowardice for fleeing from a rebel offensive east of the rebel-held town of Goma. The army is undergoing a shake-up after humiliating defeats in the eastern provinces of North and South Kivu. About 20 senior officers have been jailed for a series of violent crimes. (AFP)

Shark kills German tourist

Pertte: A shark has apparently killed a German tourist who was windsurfing off Geraldton, Western Australia, 250 miles north of here, police said. The man, 41, had last been seen struggling in a heavy swell and 30-knot wind off Point Moore. His wet suit was found shredded by shark teeth nearly three miles from the shore. (AFP)

Quakes hit China province

Peking: Two earthquakes struck China's northwest Xinjiang province within a minute, killing at least 12 people (James Pringle writes). Houses collapsed after the quakes, measuring 6.4 and 6.3 on the Richter scale. The epicentre was 40 miles east of the busy Old Silk Road city of Kashgar in Jishi county, where rescuers were still searching amid debris.

Journalists face arrest

Sydney: A British and an Australian journalist who entered Bougainville illegally were threatened with arrest by Sir Julius Chan, Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister (Roger Maynard writes). They were said to have attended a meeting between a parliamentary delegation and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, which demands secession.

Oil spill threatens last ibis

The plight of Kin, right, Japan's last crested ibis, is tormenting the nation as its habitat on Sado Island is the latest victim from a Russian oil spill on January 2. The Government admitted yesterday it had been too slow to react to the crisis after the *Nakhodoku* broke in two. Three volunteers cleaning up the spill in seven prefectures have died of heart attacks. (AFP)



Nike mania of Japanese sneaker-snatchers turns to violence

FROM ROBERT WHYMAN IN TOKYO

JAPAN'S sneaker-snatchers struck again yesterday when a 21-year-old man was attacked by a gang of youths and robbed of his valuable training shoes.

The victim made the mistake of strolling at night in Air Max running shoes, made by Nike, a brand so coveted in Japan that some owners keep them locked away and take

them out only to admire them. The shoes, with their distinctive air cushions and transparent plastic bubbles in the heels, owe their popularity to a marketing campaign that tapped into a growing interest in black sports stars and musicians.

Television commercials featuring Michael Jordan, the American basketball star, were highly effective in whetting appetites. When customers — mostly in their teens or early twenties — had to queue for hours

because of limited availability, desire for Air Max turned into a craving.

With demand outstripping supply, some shops can charge 30,000 yen (£150) for models that normally sell for half that. Trend-crazy youths pay as much as 100,000 yen for sought-after designs. When Nike puts out a new style, old designs quickly become valuable collectors' items.

Young people gripped by the mania can be ruthless in pursuit of second-

hand sports shoes, however smelly. The obsession, deplored by the American manufacturer which worries about a backlash, has triggered a minor crime wave.

Since last autumn police have recorded a rash of robberies targeting people wearing the most desirable types of Air Max. The crimes are deeply disturbing in a nation that prides itself on a low crime rate and where the incidence of muggings is well below that of other

major industrialised countries. Observers attribute the crimes to the compulsion of young people to keep up with their peers, combined with an off-noted lack of individuality.

Yesterday's attack in Sakai, near the western city of Osaka, may have been the most violent of its kind, according to police. Five teenagers armed with steel pipes beat Naoki Takahashi, took off his Air Max shoes and fled with their prize and 2,000 yen in cash.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

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So the message is clear — the sooner you get cracking, the better your chances are of retiring comfortably, or even retiring early!

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Richard Branson

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③ When I need to change the amount I save, will I be penalised in any way? Many pension plans advertised as 'flexible' allow you to make changes but charge you through the roof for the privilege. With the Virgin Personal Pension you can stop, start, increase or decrease the amount you save and you won't have to pay a penalty for doing so.

④ Once I've bought your pension, will I ever hear from you again? Some companies you'll hardly hear from. Others you'll never see the back of! We write to you twice a year to tell you how your pension is performing. If you wish, we'll also contact you once a year to make sure you're still on track and to see if there is anything you need to change. You're always in control.

*Source: Savings Market, Summer 1996.

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سكوا من الأصل

Louvre 'failed to seek owners of art looted from Jews'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRANCE'S state auditors have accused national museum officials of failing in their legal duty to seek the rightful owners of almost 2,000 artworks stolen from Jews during the Second World War. The Cour des Comptes, France's hard-hitting public spending watchdog, alleged that for half a century the state-run Musées de France made little or no effort to publicise paintings and sculptures in its collections that had been seized during the Nazi occupation, according to *Le Figaro*.

The Louvre holds 1,878 artworks originally belonging to Jews and seized by the Nazis, including works by Renoir, Rodin, Courbet, Monet and Gauguin. The smaller Musée d'Orsay has 85 such pillaged works.

The treasure trove was handed provisionally to the Musées de France after the liberation. Under a law passed in December 1949, the museums are required to publicise their guardianship of the works, try to find out who owned them and arrange for them to be reclaimed.

"In the circumstances, it would be impossible not to report that the State, and in

particular the management of the Musées de France, will have failed in its obligation to publicise the works," the auditors said in a letter to museum authorities.

"The State can never become owner of these artworks," it concluded, with the implication that France's museum authorities hoped that, if they did little, the question of ownership would lapse and the works would, in effect, become state property.

François Cachin, director of Musées de France, denied the accusations, saying that the two museums did not lay claim to the art and should be considered "simply a place where the works are deposited". M. Cachin pointed out that an inventory of the stolen art had been displayed recently on the Internet and that the catalogue would soon be published as a book.

The auditors said, however, that earlier museum administrations should bear the blame for failing to do more to track down the owners of the works. "How could a worrying situation have continued for nearly 50 years without anyone, beginning with the directors of the Musées de France, doing something about it?" the re-

port asked. The auditors pointed out that since 1954 no major effort had been made to publicise the works.

An auditors' report will be published at the end of next month, but the section on art stolen from the Jews, oddly, will be omitted, according to *Le Figaro*.

The allegations that the guardians of France's cultural heritage have been insufficiently energetic in their attempts to return looted paintings comes hard on the heels of claims that properties now owned by the city of Paris may also have been seized from Jews deported to death camps.

A book published last October alleged that Paris City Council still owns 150 buildings in the Marais district, some of which belonged to Jewish families who never reclaimed them after the war. More than 75,000 Jews were deported from France during the war, with the collaboration of the Vichy regime.

David Douvett, the French historian, noted recently that "the looting of Jewish property under Vichy remains, in the France of the 1990s, the ultimate taboo inherited from the black years".

Sweden 'received far more' Nazi gold

Stockholm: Newly examined documents show that Sweden received about 38 tonnes of gold from Nazi Germany, far more than previously known, and that the Government turned a blind eye to whether it had been looted, Swedish media said yesterday.

After the Second World War, Sweden examined gold payments for exports and returned about 13 tonnes, that presumably had been looted, to Belgium and the Netherlands. Documents on the gold were found in Swedish, Swiss and American archives.

At today's prices of about \$353 (£212) an ounce, the gold that Sweden reportedly received from the Nazis would be worth nearly \$430 million.

Avraham Burg, head of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, immediately appealed to Sweden to hand over the new information on Nazi gold in Swedish banks.

Mr Burg, whose organisation is working to trace Jewish property stolen by Nazis during the Holocaust, sent a letter to Johan Hagar, the Swedish Ambassador. He wrote: "As we cannot rule out the possibility that the gold that reached the National Bank in Sweden was taken from Jewish victims, I would ask that you relay all of the relevant information and documents to us as soon as possible." (AP)



A stranded British lorry driver makes a cup of coffee in the port of Piraeus yesterday as Greek seamen extended a nine-day strike that has halted transport and threatened Greek islands with shortages of medicine.

Lorries trapped by Greek strike

food and fuel. Seamen, farmers and drivers have clashed at several ports. The strike, in support of de-

mands for better pensions, insurance and tax treatment, has been declared illegal by the Socialist Government. Unions will stage a 24-hour national transport, hospital and public services strike tomorrow. (Reuters)

Colonies fight more power for governors

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN'S recent decision to give the governors of its few remaining colonies power to overrule locally elected assemblies has drawn sharp criticism from the Caribbean.

The chief ministers of two dependent territories — Anguilla and Montserrat — have told Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, that the new law is "immoral" because it shows that Britain is not sincere in encouraging its remaining colonies to stand on their own feet.

Last month Mr Rifkind announced that Britain is to give the governors of five dependent territories in the Caribbean new reserve powers to amend or overturn locally enacted legislation. The Government insisted that this was not linked to recent worries about drug-smuggling or money-laundering in some island dependencies, but was to avoid "excessive contingency liabilities".

The Foreign Office said that, since Britain was still answerable to international organisations for its remaining dependencies, it wanted to be able to guarantee good government. Nicholas Bonsor, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, told Parliament last month that the changes had been introduced "in the light of recent experience".

This was a clear reference to concern about money-laundering in the Caribbean and the dispute last year between the Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands and locally elected ministers over accusations that drugs were being freely sold in the islands.

Britain insists that the new powers are to be used only in emergencies. Officials in some islands were angry, however, at the implied presumption that locally elected staff might be corrupt. Hubert Hughes, the Chief Minister of Montserrat, said Britain had clearly decided that, if countries were unable to become independent, they should accept greater control from London.

Red princesses wait in wings as last waltz fades

FROM CATHERINE FIELD
IN HONG KONG

PRINCESS Caroline of Monaco called in briefly. Jeremy Irons stayed a little longer and the seriously rich Malaysian beauty Michelle Yeoh announced she will be the next Bond girl.

The Hong Kong Cancer Fund annual charity ball's 007 theme was tweaked further with the unveiling of a ballroom decorated as an MI6 operation room, the arrival of Lois Maxwell as Miss Moneypenny fame — and a well-wishing phone call from the latest James Bond, Pierce

Brosnan. Also mingling were famous locals such as Cecil Chao, son of a rich shipping family; Pansy Ho, daughter of the casino mogul Stanley Ho, whose three-day wedding party is still the talk of the social circle; the jewellery designer Kai-Yin Lo and the Burmese-Chinese beauty Loletta Fok, the former Miss Hong Kong.

The evening — rated five stars in Hong Kong's social calendar — marked the unofficial close of the last ball season under British rule and ended in a blaze of thousand-dollar bills and gold Rolls-Royces. "It was absolutely fabulous, it was a riot. I think it was a fitting, sparkly end to

the ball season," said Sally Lo, fund chairwoman.

Her tone was a mixture of nostalgia and concern. Hong Kong society's old guard is bracing for the red princesses, the wives, daughters and mistresses of China's ruling elite.

In this glittering and modern city, men work and women are ornaments. The tai tais are wives of businessmen of fantastic wealth, women who think nothing of spending \$850 for a Chanel leather mobile phone carry case or laying out £1,300 for hair bows.

Tai tais, a tradition as old as the colony itself, have gone through a series of evolutions — from Victorian

matrons to European executives' wives to the spouses of Hong Kong Chinese business chiefs. But many fear that "new money" and "mainland tastes" will overwhelm their world.

Jill Triptree, editor of the Hong Kong *Tatler*, is more sanguine. "There's been a gradual progression of the Hong Kong Chinese tai tais being the ones chiding the charity ball committees. The Europeans have very much taken a back seat," she said, adding that there will soon be more wives from the mainland wanting to be involved.

Show goes on, page 35

Britain protests to China over Hong Kong curbs

BRITAIN is to summon the Chinese Ambassador to the Foreign Office today to protest about Peking's decision to curb Hong Kong's Bill of Rights when it takes over sovereignty on July 1 (Michael Binyon writes).

Jeremy Hanley, the Minister of State with responsibility for Hong Kong, is to hand a formal note of protest to Jiang Enzhu. It is the second time that the ambassador has been summoned there in a month,

having received a British protest in December over Peking's establishment of a Provisional Legislative Council. The message is intended to underline the criticism voiced by Chris Patten, the Governor of Hong Kong.

Officials said yesterday that Britain saw no reason to repeal or water down the Bill and there was no justification for the Chinese move. "It sends all the wrong signals to Hong Kong," one official said.

No more hanging on the telephone



BRIAN RICHARDS: Product Development Manager Norwich Union Direct

DRIVERS looking for car insurance over the telephone are today being put in the fast lane thanks to an historic link-up which cuts down call times and increases accuracy.

Norwich Union Direct is the first insurer to have a direct link to online vehicle information. This means telephone operators can access driver's vehicle details instantly at the touch of a button.

Research shows that at least one woman in five admits to not knowing the exact model of the car they drive — and one in four can't remember the car's engine size.

Now Norwich Union Direct won't need to ask callers detailed questions — its operators only need to know the registration of the vehicle — and all other vehicle details will be flashed onto a screen within seconds.

The new hi-tech process by-passes time consuming questions and increases accuracy which in turn reduces average call times by nearly a minute.

With 9,000 calls per day this means significant savings for Norwich Union Direct, which it says will be passed on to customers.

Commenting on the new development, Brian Richards of Norwich Union Direct, said: "In the

past customers have had to recall very specific details relating to their cars and often they don't know the answers or sometimes make mistakes.

"Women are more likely to admit the fact that they don't know, but even men who think they know their vehicles often don't know the specifics.

"Information is accessed at the touch of a button and the business of dealing with an enquiry is speeded up — saving precious time for our customers."

He added: "The hidden benefit is that we can save money by using this new facility and those savings can be passed onto our customers — giving customers another incentive to use us for insurance quotes.

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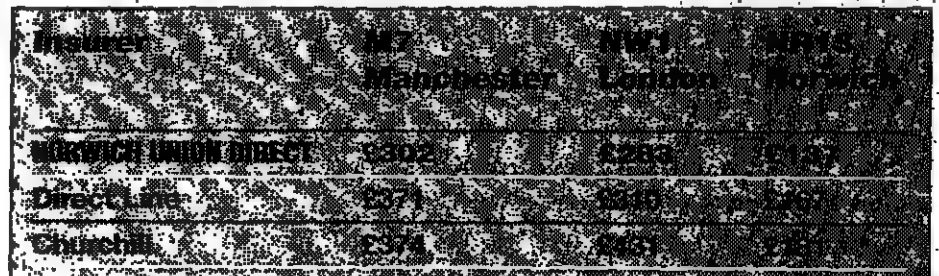
Cutting down on spending usually involves giving up something enjoyable. But if you make a New Year's resolution to ring Norwich Union Direct free you could save money on your home insurance, so you could have the cover that's right for you and still enjoy some of life's little luxuries.

In independent research, Norwich Union Direct's

home insurance quotes were cheaper in all three areas surveyed. The possible savings include a maximum of £148 in London. Quotes are based on a married couple, both aged

36 with no previous claims. For more information on home insurance, call Norwich Union Direct free on 0800 888 222 NOW — and ensure you have a Happy New Year.

■ Quotes are based on £21,000 home contents cover & £70,000 buildings cover for a 1930's three bedroom detached house.



Carole homes in on a good deal

THOUSANDS of people throughout Britain have discovered how quick and easy it is to buy their motor insurance direct over the phone. Now this growing trend is spreading to home insurance, as satisfied customers opt to take a quicker and simpler route to buying house and contents cover.

Much of this new found confidence can be attributed to the fact that many of Britain's well-known direct insurers, such as Norwich Union Direct, offer the backing of a parent company renowned for quality and

financial strength within the industry.

A typical example is Carole Gilchrist, who when the time came to renew her buildings and contents insurance recalled the savings she made by buying her motor insurance over the phone. Carole felt that they were paying a lot of money to insure their four bedroom dormer bungalow home in Littleborough, Lancashire. "I decided it was worth shopping around the leading companies, and it seemed the easiest way to do so was to make a few phone calls to get some quotations" she said. "Having the family's cars insured through direct operators, I know how simple the paperless process is, and wanted to see if we could gain the same cost advantages for renewing the cover for our house."

A premium of £247.95 per annum was quoted for buildings and contents cover by leading insurer Norwich Union Direct, which Carole accepted and cover was immediately



Carole protected her home for less with Norwich Union Direct

arranged. "We made a saving with Norwich Union Direct — but that was not the main reason for my choice. The level of cover offered was superior to our existing insurer and the competition. They included more contents and the full accidental damage cover option so it gave me the exact

amount of cover I wanted. To find out if you too could save on household insurance, ring free on 0800 888 222 for a free quotation. If both your house and contents are insured with Norwich Union Direct you will get a further discount on the premium.

IN BRIEF

- New Year's Review**
- Between Christmas presents and the January sales, every household acquires extra items — and many householders will need to consider whether their home contents policy will still cover all their possessions. Norwich Union Direct customers enjoy up to £38,000 worth of cover — and a friendly voice to offer advice on their particular needs. For a free quote on your home insurance, call them free on 0800 888 222.
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- Extended Warranties**
- Thing of the Past?**
- A new breakdown cover for major domestic appliances could make extended warranties a thing of the past. Available only from Norwich Union Direct, it is called Ultimate Appliance Breakdown Cover and gives protection against mechanical or electrical breakdown. A monthly premium of £7.95 covers all repair costs, including call-out charges, parts and labour for major appliances up to 8 years old — including cookers, fridges, washing machines, televisions, hi-fi equipment, videos, microwaves and dishwashers. With Ultimate Appliance Breakdown Cover all customers have to do when an appliance breaks down is to call the helpline and the insurer arranges the repairs, with work guaranteed. Call out, parts and labour are paid in full and if the appliance is less than five years old and can't be repaired it's replaced.
- For more information, and to arrange cover, call free on 0800 888 777.

Bonn and Prague heal 50-year rift

FROM ROGER BOYES
IN BONN

GERMANY and the Czech Republic yesterday made an important step towards ending 50 years of friction over the postwar expulsion of Sudeten Germans.

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, and Vaclav Klaus, the Czech Prime Minister, signed an accord expressing "mutual regret". There seems to be now no real hindrance to Germany asserting its role as the champion of Central Europe within an expanded European Union.

The deal, which will ease Prague's progress towards EU membership, remains controversial. As Herr Kohl arrived for his first visit to an independent Czech Republic, demonstrators from the Czech Communist

Party and the ultra-nationalist Republicans launched loud protests, declaring the accord to be a sell-out. Vera Zizulova, the Communist Party spokeswoman, said the accord was no more than a token of German domination over its neighbour. "The text makes a wholly unacceptable equation between Nazi crimes and the postwar consequences."

In Germany, the leader of the association for expelled Germans, Fritz Neubauer, said: "The open questions have all still to be resolved and this will lead to new conflicts." Above all, the accord did not guarantee the 2.5 million Sudeten Germans the basic right to a homeland nor give hope for restitution of property confiscated after the war. The parliament of both countries have to ratify the accord.

Despite the dissenting voices, Czechs and Germans were broadly satisfied yesterday. As Central and East European states are due to begin entry negotiations with the EU, a deal was regarded as imperative.

It was Vaclav Havel, the Czech President, who, within days of becoming leader of the former Czechoslovakia in 1990, first expressed public regret for the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans. He also recognised the importance of Germany in shaping Central Europe.

"Germany has been our inspiration as well as our pain, a source of understandable traumas... as well as of standards to which we turn," he said. "Some regard Germany as our greatest hope, others as our greatest peril."

This careful balance, between the

horrors inflicted by Germany on the region and the advantages offered by German commerce, has been steadily shifting in Bonn's favour.

The German roots are deep: high German was the teaching language, along with Latin, at Prague's Charles University when it opened in 1348. German trade in the 1930s helped to modernise Central Europe.

A similar trend is underway as German influence edges out Russia. Officially recorded trade between Poland and Germany is now more than £12 billion. Germany is the biggest single customer for Czech, Hungarian and Polish products.

Although Russia has not been abandoned, the orientation of the Central European economy has shifted in six years from East to West — with Germany as the magnet.

Everywhere, the signs of this geopolitical shift are visible: in the neon lights advertising German washing machines, cars and beer, and in the jobs created by German direct investment. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia there are more than 300 German companies employing about 50,000 workers. In part, the German interest reflects the high labour costs at home.

In the 1930s, German commerce raised the standard of Central European manufacturing. A similar process can be observed today. The result is a kind of pragmatic compact: Germans modernised the East in return for a foothold in a huge rediscovered market. That makes it easier to patch up old quarrels.

Leading article, page 17

Paris signals end for code that saves lives at sea

"ADIEU MORSE." At midnight on January 31, the maritime listening post on Britain's coast will stop receiving Morse code messages as France abandons the signal system that has saved countless lives at sea (Ben Macintyre writes).

France Télécom, the French telecommunications company, has decreed that the code is dead — two years before the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) formally places Samuel Morse's invention on technology's scrap heap.

The language of dots and dashes — "dits" and "dahs" in English parlance, "ts" and "tas" in French — representing letters of the alphabet and still broadcast over the emergency wavelength of 500kHz has been overtaken by verbal radio contact between land and sea which, in turn, is giving way to still more sophisticated satellite communication systems.

Last year the Brest-Le Conquet maritime radio station on the Finistère coast received a mere 152 Morse messages, compared with 200,000 minutes of radio communications. Rather than the emergency message S.O.S. (dot dot dot dash dash dash dot dot dot) for Save Our Souls, or the earlier C.Q.D. (dash dot dot dash dash dash dot dash dash dot) for Come Quick

Danger, ships in distress tend to send out a mayday call on 2182 kHz, the emergency frequency, or use a satellite telephone.

Code defenders say it still has its uses — for ships where radio operators have strong accents or radios are malfunctioning.

Morse ceased to be required on seagoing ships from 1993, when the IMO introduced the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. By 1999 it will have been phased out worldwide.

Samuel Finley Breese Morse, an American artist born in 1791, invented his telegraph in 1844 by combining lengths of wire covering the 57 miles between Washington and Baltimore. On May 24 of that year he sent his first coded message using electrical pulses of varied lengths: "What God hath wrought," he tapped out.

The international code was perfected at an 1851 conference of European nations.

The system developed an elaborate shorthand: GAOC, for example, came to mean Good Afternoon Old Chap. But what God and Morse had wrought, modern technology and France have made redundant.

GNOC — Good Night Old Chap.



Samuel Morse, artist and inventor, devised the famous code that bears his name

Warsaw says it can afford to join Nato

By ROGER BOYES

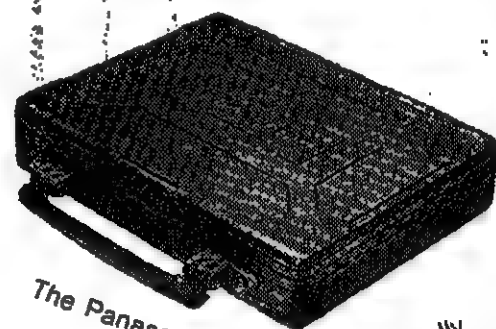
POLAND yesterday took issue with pessimistic American analysts and advisers who are urging President Clinton to step back from his promise to project Nato into Central Europe in the next two years.

A report by the Warsaw-based Euro-Atlantic Association said Polish entry to the alliance need cost only a fraction of the sums calculated by the US Congressional Budget Office and the Rand Corporation.

Drawing on figures from the Defence Ministry and other government offices, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, the report's chief author, said American estimates of \$61 billion (£8 million) for Central European accession were unrealistic. "The genuine cost can be accommodated within Poland's budget possibilities," Mr Onyszkiewicz, a former Defence Minister, said.

The direct cost would be just under \$1.5 billion over 15 years with the bulk falling before 2000, the report said. Most of the sum — \$1.26 billion — would be used for integrating Poland's command structure into the alliance, making communications compatible, ensuring that Eastern and Western air defence systems could work together and modernising military airfields. Mr Onyszkiewicz indicated that exaggerated figures in Washington were an attempt to slow eastward enlargement.

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Feminists besiege monks

Madrid: Carthusian monks have appealed to the Pope for help after feminist groups threatened to force their way into their monastery near Zaragoza in northern Spain (Tunku Varadarajan writes).

The monastery is home to the largest mural in Spain. Painted in 1772 by Goya, who was born only a few miles

away, it depicts the life of the Virgin Mary. Yet since the monks permit only men to enter their monastery, women have never been able to see Goya's work. Women's groups are campaigning for women to be allowed to see it on the ground that the painting was restored recently with the use of public money.

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John Galiano's spring-summer collection for Dior, where every detail is thought of from the clothes to the venue. His inspiration tends to be historical or anthropological



Alexander McQueen's first collection for Givenchy: "I am 27, not 57, so it's all bound to come from a different angle than the collection M Givenchy designed last year"

The British in Paris

The staid houses of Givenchy and Dior are appealing to a new kind of customer with the collections from the maverick Brits, says **Heath Brown**

British fashion design is leading the world at the moment, with the two hot names of John Galiano and Alexander McQueen at the forefront. They are making their mark at the Paris haute couture collections this week, where McQueen showed his debut

collection for Givenchy and Galiano his for Dior. Many of the foreign press and buyers were hesitant in their praise of these appointments — worried that such maverick designers would not fit into the staid world of couture.

Already, after Galiano's previous collection for Givenchy (where he designed briefly last year before moving on to Dior) the purchasers of haute couture were beginning to fall away. "There were no customers left after last year," says Hale Rubenstein, buyer for Bloomingdale's, of the reaction to McQueen's Givenchy show.

"There must be a game plan to bring in new customers," he adds. "It's the only way it will carry on." Indeed, a new customer for haute couture, where the dresses can cost up to £40,000, is desperately needed. Only about 2,000 haute couture customers remain. They are among the richest women in the world — and they are mostly over 50.

Katy England, creative director of Givenchy, is keen to emphasise that McQueen's head is not in the clouds. She says: "His next own-label collection will be totally wearable — good, sharp suits perfect for the older woman but in McQueen's signature silhouette."

A new appeal for a different kind of customer is what LVMH (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy), the owners of both Dior and Givenchy, had in mind when they appointed such avant-garde designers as Galiano and McQueen. It is not the first time that a controversial appointment has been made in the hope of revitalising an ailing couture house. In 1960, when Yves Saint Laurent took over the reins of Dior, there was press acclaim, but also the fear that traditional customers would leave in droves. In fact, he produced a ground-breaking collection, showing leather jeans, polo-neck sweaters and duffel coats in rich, new fabrics inspired by the street style of the students of the Rive Gauche. In the context of haute couture at the time, the look was utterly shocking. Saint Laurent went on to introduce the women's tuxedo — to the horror of some. But his revolutionary ideas were quick to gain acceptance. Today, his designs are firmly rooted in the fashion establish-

ment, and the looks once thought of as "wild" are the norm on catwalks everywhere. The jolt Saint Laurent administered to couture in the Sixties has an echo in what is happening with McQueen and Galiano now. In years to come, their designs will not seem as outlandish or bizarre as they do now — just beautiful and well-made.

"Look through the hype and theatrics," says Clinton Silver, chairman of the British Fashion Council, "and you will see fabrics cut and draped professionally and effortlessly — pure skill." Both McQueen and Galiano have had a good grounding in the craftsman-

ship of clothing. McQueen served an apprenticeship in Savile Row and studied at St Martin's School of Art. Galiano, another St Martin's graduate, also studied fashion there. But the designers approach their creativity very differently. With Galiano "every detail is thought of — from the clothes to the venue," says Francois Tessier, the head buyer at Browns. "He creates a fantasy and takes you there through his creations."

His inspiration tends to be historical or anthropological. Nineteenth-century "Lily Langtry" dresses are mixed with Massai beading, or French revolutionary references combined with details borrowed from Gypsy and Native American culture.

Galiano's love of drawing inspiration from the V&A and the Metropolitan Museum in New York have earned him

the reputation of being a museum junkie. "Usually, I see these things at the V&A and the Met, but now I actually touch them," he once said when given access to some of the exhibits.

There is thought to be a rivalry between the two stars, but neither admits it. "There is no rivalry at all," says McQueen. "We just come from totally different places, which is OK — we're not twins joined at the hip."

McQueen's approach is to push back the fashion barriers further and further. "I'm 27, not 57, so it's all bound to come from a different angle than the collection M Givenchy designed last year."

He strives to provide expertly tailored clothes, and appreciates the hard work the atelier has put into his first show. "That's why it was a bit over the top," he says. "You don't want boring models with washing-girl hairdos looking miserable on the catwalk when so much has been put into it."

He despairs of the comments that have been made about the flamboyance of the show. "One year I put an Ethiopian child on a T-shirt, to show a more serious side, and got criticised — and the next I relax into fantasy and get criticised again. I can't win."

But the element of fantasy by both designers can be excused when we think of the surreal world at which their culture collections are aimed. "Who knows what these women wear and what kinds of lives they lead," he says.

It is the unique approach of the British designers that sets them apart. Part of their appeal is no doubt to do with the English sense of eccentricity, but a good part of the credit is also due to the excellent training the UK has to offer. Art colleges such as Central St Martin's (the old St Martin's School of Art), Ravensbourne, and Metropolitan University in Manchester nurture talent and encourage experimentation and individuality.

In the past, British colleges were criticised for not taking the commercial aspects of the fashion industry into account. But now the sometimes outé designers they produce are, ironically, the only people capable of renewing the fantasy of haute couture.

What the baby books don't say about shopping

Smart shops and small children are a tricky combination

THE DAY my son was due, I had a premonition that something awful was about to happen. Not to him, but to me. Like a woman in the grip of an alien intelligence, I put on my coat and headed for Harvey Nichols, where I bought several fragile lace bras, a buttery soft kid jacket and a pair of black suede thigh boots. As I groped over my bump in an attempt to zip up the boots, the poogle-eyed assistant's curiosity finally overcame her icy professional pose. "When's the baby due, exactly?" she asked. "Today," said I, finally losing the ap-

"Cool," she squeaked. Knightsbridge accent all adrift in her dismay, "don't ave it're will you?" Later that evening I felt a sudden pang. It turned out to be the baby on its way — but it might just as well have been a twinge of recognition that this was the last carefree shopping I would ever do.

The books for novice mothers are so eloquent on the frightful consequences of having a baby — everything slipping by about six inches — that it can come as a surprise to find yourself, such the same shape that you were when you started. A brief moment of euphoria, and your thoughts naturally turn to the new season's collections. A kind of strange euphoria is induced by the thought: "I'm 27, not 57, so it's all bound to come from a different angle than the collection M Givenchy designed last year."

YOU, I tell, yourself it will get better with time. It doesn't. At five, my son feels ready to share with me his transient opinions on fashion. "That's a horrible frock. And why is your bottom all wobbly?" From about seven onwards, friends tell me, one's child can stand silently, rolling their eyes. The whole business is so unutterably bloody that you begin to wonder why you do it. Until you remember that, however dreadful it is shopping with children, the experience pales into insignificance beside the Gothic horror of shopping with their father. But that's another story.

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Still waiting for the joy of sex

ASPECTS OF LOVE

In Part Three of our series on love in the Nineties, the novelist Mavis Cheek says women are still not satisfied

So, here we are, *fin de siècle*, a century that has seen two world wars, technological advances that make H. G. Wells look like Enid Blyton, political changes that the Tsar, Emperor or Kaiser would never have believed possible, not to mention the little old matter of Global Extinction — and what still exercises us to the very root of our being? Sex. Yours, mine, everybody's.

The Great Molochian God of Carnal Enterprise wants us all to be At It — as successfully as possible — and if we aren't, then something is seriously wrong. Celibacy no longer seems to exist in our lexicon. Basically the absorbing phenomenon of the 20th century is whether or not he is/she is/you are Getting Laid.

At the turn of the century, after Big Ben chimed the hour to usher in 1901, most of the wives (as they nearly exclusively were) who found themselves being whisked off to bed to begin the New Dawn with a Damn Good Seeing To, went with no expectations. They were not required to enjoy it. The pleasure of sex was a right solely reserved for their husbands. And their husbands could take it or leave it. If they wanted to, they did, and if they didn't want to, they read the paper. Of course, dotted among the majority were a few enlightened spirits, but for those few women who did discover the joy of sex that night, it — or rather — they came as a nice surprise.

And then suddenly, out of the murky mists of this New Dawn, ventured enlightenment. The Blessed Marie Stopes, in many respects barking mad and therefore usefully indifferent to hostility, hove into view, dancing like a daisy on the lawn, flowing with classical drapery and looking just like Pandora reincarnate. Which, of course, she was. Because, having pointed out that women need not have sex solely to procreate, she also made the logical connection which has caused us more confusion, more anxiety, than anything ever since — the revolutionary notion that women, other than the likes of Moll Flanders and Peg of Old Drury, had the right to be pleased, too. But it took us another few decades to get up enough steam to embrace the idea of sexual equality. And we still haven't cracked it.

Now you can call me a silly little running-dog of reactionary Post-Modernism if you like, but sex in the Spitzes wasn't that revolutionary. The amount of it may have been. In fact, the amount certainly was. But what about the quality? The freedom to do it was as much the turn-on as the it itself. Naturally. Because we were still learning.

Who from that time does not remember the magazine *Fortune*? Our monthly sex manual. "Take her nipple between thumb and forefinger and roll it around until she begins to move with uncontrollable pleasure..." How many of us girls lay there patiently waiting for uncontrollable pleasure to commence while our boyfriends painstakingly followed the instructions? And if it didn't, how many of us suffered a creeping sense of William Brown lays Violet Elizabeth Bort? Well what can you expect if you're only a girl?

And then there was *The Joy Of Sex*. A moustachioed man looking like the romantic icon Che Guevara and a woman looking like somebody's auntie, together playing a rather dull



Mavis Cheek: "What still exercises us to the very root of our being? Sex. Yours, mine, everybody's."

instructional game of doctors and nurses... sold in its thousands.

All gains are losses. Not that I advocate endless pregnancies and no right over our twiddly bits, but where once we women could totter about in our bustles and corsets and not have the worry of whether the earth moved, since Ms Stopes's profound perspicacity, and the sexual cloudburst of the Sixties, we now totter about in our high heels and Wonderbras flaring our nostrils, and trembling inside in case it doesn't. Casual sex? Hah!

And to confound us all even further, the blokes aren't having too easy a time either. The primal urge of the hunter/gatherer with animal tendencies and a built-in programme to think about sex every six minutes which has, presumably, taken several thousand years to perfect (and obviously in some cases requires several thousand more), must give way in a mere 30 years to one who will look butch in a pinny, cook, sew, wash, and discuss our PMT on one side of the bedroom door, and then swing from a chandelier emulating a pogo stick and saying Me Tarzan on the other.

Were my 18-year-old daughter, who is about to embark on a university career studying useless old things like literature and art, to listen to a word I

say, she would read psychology and become a sex therapist. I could give up novels, and we could both live side by side in mansions in Regent's Park.

This time, when Big Ben chimes the hour of the new century and millennium, there will be a lot of anxious people standing around thinking about the best way to organise the celebratory bonk.

The women will be wearing condoms in their hats and wondering if they dare say "How about it" without risking deflation in the pogo stick department because the primal hunter/gatherer hasn't quite understood that he's free of his need to show how bold he is. And quite a lot of the women will secretly sigh for the days when he said "Ugh" and threw you over his shoulder and that was that.

The men will either assert themselves by drinking a lot, thereby ending the question anyway. Or they will put their hearts and souls into looking as if they have no expectations and avoid staring at the hat. Either way, there will be a lot of anxiety floating about. The worst bit of all is that everybody else will look as if they have cracked it. You will feel you are the only one on the planet who has not.

And for those of us who thought carnal old Moloch would leave us alone when our teeth started falling out — we must think again. In a recent study on sexuality, it was stated that folk in their sixties and seventies were now having the best sex of their lives.

This seems a very positive, not to say mind-boggling, discovery. Especially since I pictured myself fetching up with a rubber hip joint and a hearing aid, somewhere on the South Coast, and being perfectly poisonous to everybody at last. Instead, the voracious Moloch chomps on. Not to let the side down, I must besport a dairy varicose ankle and give the glad eye to some old geezer on the next bench to mine. And he, poor chap, must wobble his dewlaps, set aside his copy of *The Oldie*, and offer me a good time.

And Oh Lor, what about procedures? In the old days it used to follow that when two people took their glasses off, you knew they meant business — now, presumably, the significant moment is when he or she lets the Zimmer frame drop. It puts a whole new courtly meaning on He Fell At My Feet. And, of course, a whole new perspective on Getting Laid.

© Mavis Cheek's latest novel, *Getting Back Brahms*, will be published by Faber on April 21, price £14.99

Women aren't taking men's jobs because they've won the equality battle. It's about cutting costs

Women on Top: Why it's better to be a woman: Sometimes it's hard to be a man: Women win battle of the sexes: these are just some recent headlines to stories documenting the upward rise of the female sex.

It has become the accepted wisdom of the day that no longer are the odds stacked against us and that, indeed, it is now men — underachieving at school, unwanted in the workplace — who more properly justify the term the second sex. Strange, then, that the report just out from the Equal Opportunities Commission confirms none of this. Far from women having gained supremacy, they — we — haven't even achieved equality. Women still earn, on average, 20 per cent less than their male counterparts and not until the year 2040, it is reckoned, will that gap close.

These are shocking findings, but peculiarly satisfying to read all the same. It is important that we see the facts and are forced to recognise that the essentially misogynistic picture of women as greedy looters and appropriators of the rights and jobs of men is a false one. The evidence points to the fact that men are still being paid a premium just for being male.

Clearly this is wrong. What case could there be to argue for it? And yet there are plenty of people who would be happy to see a greater disparity in men and women's pay: indeed, they would like to see women out of the workplace altogether.

I can understand why certain men should feel that the world would be a better place if women stayed at home while men went out to work. And I have a glimmer of understanding why some women support this view. Men whose supremacy has been questioned are bound to be resentful, and who wouldn't protect their own power base?

The female argument for unequal pay, or so little pay that there could be no incentive to enter the workplace, is superficially different, but essentially the same. Women who regard the office as a male preserve need to feel that the domestic sphere is valued or, more, that they are valued for remaining in and shaping it. Any appreciation of a female workforce feels like a criticism of them: inequality of pay is the last remaining corroboration of their way of life.

There is, however, some truth in the depiction of women finding employment at the cost of men losing theirs. What people should recognise, though, is that this is a consequence of the unfair pay differential. Employers don't give jobs to women because of some feminist drive or belief in the higher ability of women to get the job done. They do it because it cuts their wages bill. Indeed, many women at the lower end of the scale (the ones working part-time who are earning 88 per cent less than the full-time men doing the same job) may be bizarrely grateful for the inequality.

Paying the price for not minding the wage gap...



Nigella Lawson

even as they resent it. Of course, too much attention is always paid to women at the other, loftier, end of the scale. Somehow it is difficult to have sympathy for a female film star who complains that she gets a mere \$2 million a movie while her male counterparts are paid three or more times that amount. Nevertheless, it does influence, subliminally, the way we regard all complaints about pay gaps and their unfairness.

Women who complain about their pay are just whingers as far as most people are concerned: "lucky to have a job at all" is, one deduces, the implication. Implicit also is the notion that by entering the workforce women are taking men's jobs away from them. But only historically is this true. Women may be taking jobs once done by men but that doesn't make any job a man's job. Men do not have any more right to employment than women do, although the fact that they get paid more for doing the same work might seem to suggest that this is indeed the case.

One might think, though, that it would be impossible for a workforce so unequally remunerated to work together. But while unemployment is high, who is in a position to complain? Besides — apart from those industries which still operate a fixed wage scale — which of us ever knows what the next employee is earning? The demise of unionised labour on the one hand means that more and more salaries are paid according to personal con-

tracts. That is especially true in managerial occupations which, incidentally, have a particularly large sex-pay differential. And on the other hand, now that sex is no longer a taboo, munny increasingly is. No one discusses what they get paid over here and would rather die than ask what a colleague's salary is.

It is also undeniable that even though society, the way we live our lives, has changed, at the back of our minds is the idea that a man is the breadwinner. He must earn to support a wife and children; women, if they are not selfish careerists hellbent on their own advancement, are otherwise just working for pin money. There couldn't be a more outdated and economically out-of-focus picture of how we live now, and yet we seem unable or disinclined to accept that. But then, change is always difficult. There is bound to be a lag between reality and the image we have of it.

But in the case of pay, it seems that this discrepancy has worked the other way round. We are so convinced that we live in the great post-feminist age (and that's a phrase that should immediately be scrubbed from the language) that we are in danger of overlooking the actual evidence: which is that unless we do something about it, it will take another half century for us to achieve the equality that we fondly though erroneously imagine we have long since won.

I AM far from impressed by the idea of the new "future-proof" phone. It's not the proposed revision (yet again) of the telephone numbers that exercises me particularly, but the talk that goes with it of our "maintaining our place in the forefront of world telecommunications".

For I have come to the conclusion that we are not temperamentally suited to be any place other than at the very slaphop of world telecommunications. I cite in evidence Call Waiting. This is a means by which one can tell someone is trying to ring when one is already on the phone.

This works wonderfully in America but not at all over here. Every time I ring someone who's got Call Waiting (and is already talking to someone else) and hear the electronic message come down the line telling me not to hang up — "the person you are calling knows you are waiting" — I become enraged. Because everyone here is so afraid of seeming rude by letting their first caller know that a second is on the line that they ignore the signal.

Now, I have some sympathy with that ditheriness: it's why, after all, I don't have Call Waiting on my line. But please, would others similarly craven just drop the service? From the caller's point of view, it would be better to hear an engaged signal rather than be left hanging on with someone turning insult to injury by telling us that our presence is being noted — just ignored.

TOMORROW

The nurse didn't go so far as to say: 'Have you ever heard of contraception?' But her lecture was stinging. Maureen Freely on the pleasures of parenthood

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PAN

Alan Coren



■ Welcome to the poll of the century, and goodbye to the century of the poll

I have, I do believe, the key to the Great Millennium Exhibition. I even know what that key, shed of metaphor, would look like. It would look like a Yale key. I know this because, if the nation were asked to vote for its favourite key, the Yale would unquestionably come top. It would leave the Chubb and the Ingersoll at the post.

And that is the key to the key, for the key to the Great Millennium Exhibition is vor populi. And since it seems to be generally agreed that what the Greenwich Megadome should contain is the quintessence of Britain, it must surely follow, in these poll-driven times, that it has to be left to the British people to determine what that quintessence is. There must, before the Megadome is topped out, be national referendums about everything it is to enshrine.

This revelation came to me in the small hours of Tuesday morning, when, as so often, I had given up counting sheep in favour of gathering their wool, and it came while I was mulling the curious fact that, a few hours earlier, the British people had elected *The Lord of the Rings* as their book of the century. I tried to picture someone enjoying it, and suddenly Des Lynam sprang (all right, sauntered) into my mind. It took but a moment to realise why: it was because Des himself had, a month back, been elected by the British as their personality of the century. Who better, then, to place in a snug fireside chair, deep in Middle Earth, accompanied only by the voice of Doris Day trilling *Mow Over, Darling* — which the British recently voted song of the century — as the core exhibit and icon of Megadome 2000?

But how shall we determine the nature of Des's fireside chair? A poll must be held. It will almost certainly come up with a reproduction Regency wing item in green leather, with distressed buttons. And, of course, a matching pouffe, for what I am sure the British people will decide are Des's Hush Puppies. As for Des's real puppies, who can doubt that some 87 per cent of the population will plump for yellow labradors, to match his lavatory paper, itself a landslide victory? What these are romping on, mind, as Des chuckles over his elves, is less guessable: once, it would have been figured Wilton, later a nice shagpile, but the bucolic style is a strong runner these days — cf. Des's log fire, which pulled over 70 per cent of the heating vote — and it could well be that the Megadome will end up with restored floorboards and a scatter of John Lewis oriental rugs, even if these do sit somewhat uneasily with his nice Anglepousie lamp, unquestionably Britain's illumination of choice.

Oh, look, Des is reaching for a tasty titbit from the recently elected oakente table, usefully de-nested beside his chair. Megadome visitors crane to see. Will it be a stick of KiriKai or a nibble of Mars? This time I cannot anticipate, the voting will have been close, there is even an outside chance that a Penguin will sneak up and snatch victory at the wire; one prays only that it does not spoil his appetite (voted Britain's second favourite caution, after "mind how you go") for the Delia Smith steak-and-kidney pudding currently simmering in his (solid-fuel) Aga in the Megadome's flagstoned and copper-hung kitchen.

I feel some of you growing restless, as 2000 approaches, over what you will see hanging on Des's wall: will it be a Tretchikoff or a David Shepherd? Well, very likely both — unless, between now and then, some sty opportunist knocks up a green-faced woman riding an elephant, especially if he throws in a couple of gleaners for good measure.

And has Des been voted a car? He has: beyond his multicoloured window (through which, at every hour on the hour, the hologrammed face of dear Eric Morecambe will pop, asking Des to bring him sunshine), the British people's most cherished motor sits in the rear-garage drive. It is a Morris Minor. Very soon now, Des will put down Tolkien, turn off Doris, wind the carriage clock which beats its grandfatherly only after a recount, and drive across the Megadome to a thatched pub with a big blonde barmaid and a shovell penny board for a pint of lukewarm bitter and a Smith's Original crisp. He will not, however, stay long. He must get back for an early dinner. Because tonight, as every night, Des has tickets for *The Mousetrap*.

BIG BROTHER



Give charity a chance

The most vulnerable among us, the old and the young, need to be freed from the dead hand of the welfare state

Slowly the fog begins to thin. From its depths we see dark shapes of things to come. There looms the gaunt visage of Gordon Brown. Round him chatter dwarfs — Blunkett, Smith, Harman, Straw — tugging at his purse. Over them worries a wizard covered in glitter, his face a rictus smile. We mortals thought we knew it all. We stumble blinking from the grim Nineties to a land of bright promise ahead. Yet what horror do these creatures of the fog foretell? They are not true Hobbits.

Which brings me to social services privatisation. On Friday of each week, spin-doctors fan out from the party headquarters to tell the Sunday papers what to print. Last Friday the Tory doctors told them to print a story about how the last bastions of the welfare state, old people's and children's care, were to be kicked out of the public sector. Ministers still had red blood in their veins, a White Paper would be published and blue water put between the rainbow tale. They also printed Labour's instant denunciation. The relevant dailies, Chris Smith, derided this "clapped-out ideology". He condemned those who could not save the "most vulnerable in our society". Destitute women, orphans and the disabled, he implied, were to be thrown to the wolves of private profit. At last, thought Mr Smith, here was a socialist bone on which he could chew. Yet between breakfast and dinner, somebody got at Mr Smith. By Sunday the policy was transformed. It would be looked at pragmatically. No option was being rejected, only a "central diktat". Was Mr Smith outraged? No. Was he all sweet reason? Of course.

What changed Mr Smith was the rattling chains and the clanking letters of Mr Brown. Mr Brown is already the embodiment of the Treasury view. He is more than Chancellor-in-waiting. He is jailer of the demon of "tax-and-spend", whose escape his colleagues are always trying to effect. Sub-contracting personal social services for the elderly and children is likely to save money. It might recoup as much as £2 billion a year if forcefully implemented. If it upsets the unions and enrages the Left, too bad — or so good.

In British public administration, some policies are born dull, some achieve dullness and some (such as Europe) have dullness thrust upon them. Personal social services are all three. They embody Bagehot's dictum that good gov-

ernment aspires to the state of tedium. They are a backwater of a backwater. Even VAT regulations sparkle compared with residential and domiciliary care for the elderly and young people. These services may employ a quarter of a million people in England and Wales. They may cost £8 billion, the equivalent of 4p on income tax. But they are about the incontinent old, the retarded young, the incurable, the uncontrollable, the unthinkable. We wish to fund them and forget. We want them to be dull.

When in the 1980s Margaret Thatcher pressed the welfare state to go out to tender, she meant refuse collection, school buses, street-cleaning and hospital laundries. The result has been generally successful. Prices fell, efficiency rose and many a lucrative union racket was smashed. Labour has no pledge to rescind the policy. In 1993, the same was supposed to happen to old people's homes. A target was set of 85 per cent of places to be privately provided. Only 46 per cent has been achieved. As for children in care, 60 per cent are privately fostered, but almost all the rest are in local council homes.

Some of these institutions are admirable and efficient. Some are not: witness yesterday's revelations about childcare in Croydon. There may be nothing peculiarly unsound about a public-sector home, but there is something peculiarly inefficient. The annual report of the Department of Health shows unit costs in the public sector rising steadily ahead of inflation. New figures apparently also show that costs in the private sector are roughly 20 per cent lower than in the public. In addition, as one scandal after another testifies, local council homes are not independently inspected. They are truly out of sight and out of mind.

Nobody is calling for the State to abandon responsibility for the vulnerable young and old. From the founding hospital to the great charitable asylums,

the voluntary sector served the nation well. Today, "caring" is a central function of the welfare state. But to care does not mean to provide. A service can be stipulated, purchased and monitored. He who pays the piper can call the tune, but he need not play the pipe.

We now know that the rot of child abuse that Dickens exposed in the unregulated charitable sector can spread largely undetected through the public sector. The account given yesterday by the former social services director of Croydon was a harrowing instance of "producer capture". Here was a union-dominated service on which nobody dared blow the whistle.

Simon Jenkins

Care of the vulnerable is itself vulnerable. It attracts both the best and the worst of human characteristics. A child in care now has, depending on the area, between £150 and £300 a week spent on him or her. This is more than all but the very wealthiest families spend on a child. The State is entitled to value for money. Small wonder that officials charged with spending such sums want to see them go to homes run by friends and party colleagues. Small wonder that they prefer fostering to adoption, because fostering keeps children under their control and the money flowing. (The stuffing of adoption in Britain by local political activists is costly and cruel, both to children and to prospective parents.)

Most Tory reforms have been hostile to diversity in public service. Schools, hospitals, clinics, libraries and police stations all now operate under centralised regimes unthinkable 20 years ago. Local government is disempowered, and scope for innovation has been diminished. But one reform has undoubtedly energised local government: competitive tendering of non-personal services. Streets are cleaner and rubbish is better collected as a result.

Personal services have proved more delicate. The care of the elderly, the mentally disabled and children without families is unlikely to be a popular candidate for selling to a French water company or American entrepreneur. Allowing people to profit from taxes paid for the care of the elderly is not an appealing prospect — except under the most tightly monitored contracts. What is attractive is the opening this policy offers to the charitable sector.

The voluntary principle that began Barnardo's 112 homes was a good one. There is no evidence that the State has any unique competence in caring for children without families. The private charity was once applied to the poorest human emotion. In the 1960s it was turned into a means to justify the growth of union co-operatives. "Not charity but a right" was the slogan. It applied to social benefits but not to social services.

Neither charity nor its benign sister, "the public service ethos" has fared well under the financial hierarchies beloved of Thatcherite ministers. Only one police chief, Hampshire's John Hoddinott, refused to sign the Home Office's odious payment-by-results bonus scheme, protesting that a public servant should need no bribe to work his best. The proposal to put old people's services and children's care to tender is a gamble, a gamble with the nation's charity and its ethos of public service.

The gamble is honourable. It is a truth widely acknowledged that people care more about their fellow humans when doing so voluntarily, even unpaid. They may need sensitive selection, supervision, equipment and inspection. But Britain's existing volunteer services, such as the lifeboats and the Samaritans, are exemplars. The charitable instinct is inherent in the concept of a strong community. It leads to the forming of associations, Adams Smith's "leads to sympathy, compassion and fellow feeling" of Tocqueville's "bedrock of democracy". Community has had a bleak time under the Tories. Perhaps its hour has come in this worthy cause.

The enthusiast for local democracy must learn to separate sheep from goats. Personal social services are not like roads or schools or planning, where political questions ought to be decided by election. They are national services, best purchased locally and best provided privately. Labour's second thoughts on this were better than its first.

A Cabinet seat for Europe

Will Blair will set up a new ministry, asks Sue Cameron

If Tony Blair makes it to Downing Street this spring he may well find on his desk a Whitehall brief arguing the case for a new "Department for Europe". Five years ago, the file prepared for Neil Kinnock included such a proposal, but it was shelved when Labour lost the election. Now, with campaigning under way in earnest, officials are looking at the idea again as they prepare advice for possible new ministers. This time the need for a radical rethink about how the British government machine deals with Europe is far more urgent.

The dithering and disunity of politicians is causing Whitehall itself to falter. Civil servants are being pressurised on all sides. At home their political masters in the Labour Party are bickering and backtracking over Europe. Once it would not have mattered to Whitehall, for officials were able to take a long view of Brussels and all its works. No longer.

Today other leading members of the EU are stepping up the pace, setting tight deadlines, pressing for answers. The meeting this month between John Major and Wim Kok, Prime Minister of The Netherlands, which currently holds the EU presidency, showed that Britain's partners are determined to push ahead with a new treaty in Amsterdam this June. For British officials there is no escape. As the Conservative MEP Graham Mather puts it: "Suddenly Europe has become a red-hot-coals job for Whitehall civil servants, and there's nowhere for them to hide. The problem is that Whitehall hasn't re-engineered itself to cope with Europe and the fact that today all the wicked issues are European — from mad cows to economic and monetary policy."

Mr Mather is among those who believe Britain needs a Department for Europe headed by a Cabinet minister and with its own permanent secretary and subject specialists. Adherents of the idea — inside and outside Whitehall — say that if Britain is to get to the heart of Europe then we must have a department to spearhead such a drive and to act as a focus for European policy.

More significantly, they insist that if Britain wants to build further integration of the EU nations, the need for a separate department is even greater. They stress that only a department with real clout inside the government machine can stop "some" as a "department" from waving a paper over government departments. The way to negotiate a multi-speed Europe, they claim, is to have a single, co-ordinating department dedicated to achieving that.

There is already a unit in the Cabinet Office charged with the job of co-ordinating Whitehall's response to Europe in crucial matters such as the inter-governmental conference. It is well regarded — not least by continental civil servants — and could form the nucleus of a new department. There is also a Minister for Europe, but David Davis, the current holder of the post, is not in the Cabinet. He is therefore "outranked" by all Cabinet ministers in Britain and also by his opposite numbers in France and Germany. Michèle Barrière, the French Minister for Europe, is of Cabinet rank, as is Germany's Werner Hoyer.

Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, whose pleas to Tony Blair to stop bickering were rebuffed on Monday, has called for a Cabinet rank minister for Europe — in his book *The Challenge of Europe — Can Britain Win?* he says such a post would "enhance the status of a parliamentary minister going some way to remedy the weakness of departmental ministers who are available only part-time for their European responsibilities". It is a pity he has not acted on his theory. Opposition to the creation of a Department for Europe will come from some Foreign Office people who fear it would diminish their empire. The Foreign Secretary, whether the Tory Malcolm Rifkind or Labour's Robin Cook, is likely to fight the idea for precisely that reason. Yet there is a halfway house.

Over at the Treasury, the Chief Secretary has Cabinet rank, although there is no doubt that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is the boss. A new Department for Europe could be kept under the aegis of the Foreign Office, with its Cabinet rank minister ordering authority to the Foreign Secretary. Britain experimented with such a system when Lord Carrington was Foreign Secretary and Sir Ian (now Lord) Giddens spoke on foreign affairs as a Cabinet minister in the Commons.

Action to prime the government machine on Europe is urgently needed. It would be unkind to suggest that parts of Whitehall are in a blue funk about Europe, but it might be accurate. Officials are increasingly worried about being drawn willy-nilly into the political battle over Europe — so much so that some are nervous of fighting Britain's corner as hard as they might over bread-and-butter matters.

Others are said to be so fearful of European MPs accusing them of "drawing up secret" schemes for joining a single currency that they are not putting enough effort into the prudent and necessary contingency plans. Whatever political decisions are taken about the EU after the election, a Department for Europe would help to concentrate the minds of ministers and officials. It would encourage an end to the paralysis gripping our politicians and lend a new robustness to Britain's dealings with its EU partners. That is something that both Europhobes and Europhiles might welcome.

Ego centre

ATTEMPTS to turn Sigmund Freud's birthplace into a museum are being met with fierce resistance by its owners, who run it as a massage parlour. The birthplace is not on the scale of the Freud Museum in north London, but the local council in Příbor, in the Czech Republic, wants to buy it, considering it a wasted asset in a town whose main feature is the Lonka sock factory.

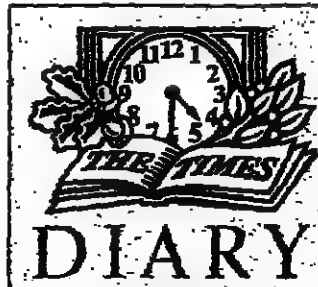
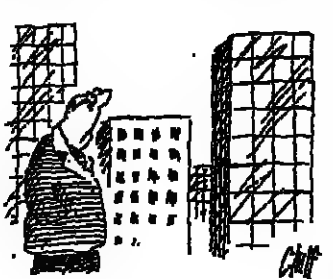
The Freud family — Sigmund, his mother and wool merchant father — lived in the 16th by 16th basement of the house until Freud moved to Vienna in 1859. The room now contains fake marble flooring and white sofas. A plastic Hawaiian sunset curtain separates the reception from the ultraviolet-lit massage room.

"We are offering our own sort of therapy," says Mrs Matula, the owner, surrounded by her jars of massage oil and Chinese relaxation balls. She has asked the council for the equivalent of £80,000 for the house at 117 Schlossergasse. "Too much," they say, offering £11,000.

Perhaps this is justice for Příbor's long neglect of its most famous son. It was only in 1969

that the town built a monument to him, and it took until 1994 to give him honorary citizenship. "Our trouble," means a perceptive deputy mayor, "is that most people only connect Freud with Vienna, and definitely not with a massage parlour in a North Moravian town."

Stringent measures have been introduced at The Guardian, where reporters are accustomed to using taxis to get about town. In an attempt to discourage such



extravagance, the paper has bought two bicycles to be used by journalists. The Editor's office explains that its troops will get to stories faster than ever before.

Booking out

AT THE *Evening Standard*, they were mourning the resignation of their literary editor Andrew (A.N.) Wilson on the eve of the Whitbread Book of the Year Award. He is leaving to write novels.

Claims that he fell out with the Editor, Max Hastings, a man happiest on a rough shoot in the wilds of Ireland, after being forced to review angling books and tales of country pursuits are scotched by Hastings himself. "It's very sad that he's decided to resign after seven years, but he's going to carry on writing for us," he says. "If there was any acrimony about

this, I doubt he would be planning to spend the weekend with me — which he is." Hastings would not be drawn on a successor, but Miriam Gross, the longstanding literary editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, is being mentioned.

Bill's men

ANYONE who thought President Clinton had given up on Northern Ireland may have been surprised to find two Ulstermen attending his inauguration by personal invitation. John McCaffrey, the director of development at the University of Ulster, and David Kitchen, the director of university programmes, say they were flown over as guests of Bill, whom they met during his visit to Belfast in 1995. "We've had good tickets and we're hanging out with the President's stepister," said Kitchen. No matter that no one recalls Clinton having a stepister.

Grrrrrrls

OVER in Hollywood, they are preparing for the Oscars with a certain trepidation. They are afraid that this year's awards ceremony could turn nasty because of tensions between two singers-turned-actresses: Madonna and Courtney Love.



Madonna and Love: will the Oscars drive them apart?

Not only do the dear girls not like each other, they share a career path, from raunchy to almost respectable. Madonna, once noted for her conical bras, is now the Oscar-tipped star of *Evita*. Love, a princess of "grunge" and widow of the junkie Kurt Cobain, has been turning up to showings of her movie *The People vs. Larry Flynt* in designer dresses.

Madonna has said that she has nightmares of Love pursuing her with a gun, while Love has compared Madonna to a vampire. She has also added: "Every decade has its star and Madonna was it in



the Eighties. But the Eighties are over." Prepare for a clash.

Brida Clivar, the *Evening Standard* brought chess aficionados back to Simpson's in the Strand, has handed in his resignation to pursue his own business interests. With every inch of his 5'10" inch waist a testament to the production of the finest roasts and steaks, Clivar is a force to be reckoned with. Simpson's will feel empty without him.

P.H.S



GERMANY LOOKS EAST

But Central Europe should not take its commitment for granted

The ghost of Munich was finally laid to rest yesterday, with the formal signing in Prague of a joint declaration by Helmut Kohl and Václav Klaus, the Czech Prime Minister, to cement the post-war reconciliation between Germany and the Czech Republic. In the accord, Germany expressed "sorrow" at the Nazi occupation and the Czechs "regretted" the expulsion after the Second World War of 2.5 million Germans from the Sudetenland. Herr Kohl also promised to support Czech membership of the European Union. The accord is intended to end one of the bitterest legacies of Hitler's aggression, remove the last barrier to German influence in Mitteleuropa and speed the entry of Germany's eastern neighbours into the European Union. Yet all three hopes may yet be disappointed; and Eastern Europe has reason to fear a new betrayal.

The courage and vision of Herr Kohl and Mr Klaus are not in question. Both men were determined to seek an accommodation despite fierce domestic opposition. Neither received in full what he wanted. And both know that the resentment of the German expellees as well as the Czechs who lost families and property during the German occupation will continue to poison domestic politics and public sentiment. Neither was fully able to acknowledge guilt at what happened; talk of "sorrow" and "regret" will still look mealy-mouthed to those who remember what took place on Czechoslovak soil.

Yet the accord does, at last, allow Germany to restore its political and cultural influence to an area where over the centuries it has played a generally determining role. This influence can already be seen on the ground; since the collapse of communism, German firms, capital, exports and know-how have moved in to take full advantage of the new markets in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Germany is by far the biggest market for East European industries struggling to

break out of the stifling constrictions of the old Comecon framework. Given the sluggish response from other Western capitals and the failure of industry in countries such as Britain to respond to the yearning of the newly liberated peoples to be reconnected, spiritually and economically, to the West, this comes as no surprise. Bonn simply filled the vacuum which had been left by the departing Russians.

For many in Germany's hinterland, the investment by Volkswagen, the neon lights advertising German washing machines, the beer and foodstuffs from Bavaria, the training opportunities and weekend tourist trips are welcome. Inevitably, German industrial habits, the German language and the German vision of the new Europe have swept in with the consumer tide.

But not all economists or politicians are without reservations. They do not want to swap dependency on Moscow for Berlin. Above all, they are not convinced, despite warm words in Bonn, that Germany is as zealous in promoting their interests within the EU as it is in furthering its own interests to the east.

The crucial demand of Budapest, Warsaw and Prague is for access to EU markets, especially for their farm products. And Germany has shown that it is far from championing the cause of the EU applicants. Appealing the demands of inefficient farmers in Bavaria sways decision-making in Bonn.

There has been a clear retreat in Germany from a commitment to the earliest possible EU entry of the Central Europeans, with emphasis instead on consolidating monetary and political integration among the present members. Already, Eastern Europeans fear Nato backsliding over fast entry into the Atlantic alliance. Nothing would be crueler than to encourage them to prepare for EU membership while holding up their exports at the frontier and their aspirations at the negotiating table.

STILL IN WAITING

The perils of appearing to be already in power

It is Opposition parties who are supposed to endure humiliation. Their Shadow Foreign Secretaries are mistaken for ambassadors by American Presidents. Their spokesmen work in cubbyholes with a researcher, a shared secretary and a dog. They lament the lack of media coverage for their policies. And they have to rely on the Tube to take them to fashionable parties.

So it must be amusing for Labour Party leaders to experience the tables being turned. Last week's wrangling over the Millennium Exhibition, for instance, had the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, visiting Tony Blair's office to request the Labour leader to support the Millennium Commission's plans for Greenwich. This had all the ingredients that Mr Blair's spin-doctors could have wished for: the public was left with the impression that Labour was merely awaiting the summons to govern in a few months' time.

Then yesterday, at the launch of a report by top businessmen that broadly backed Labour's policies, Mr Blair had another chance to embarrass Mr Heseltine. The Deputy Prime Minister, having first declined an invitation to attend the launch, had asked if he could come after all once he saw how much publicity the event would generate for Labour. Mr Blair joked that he would have to resort to the new stalking laws if the Deputy Prime Minister followed him to Amsterdam on Friday.

This is all good knockabout stuff. And the Government has clearly contributed to the public's perception of Labour as a government-in-waiting. With a tiny majority, the

Tories' discipline has become ragged, and they govern at the mercy of events: last night's health vote saw fierce bullying by the whips. Labour likes to boast of the changed policies that it has achieved even in opposition: reduced VAT on fuel, stalking and paedophile Bills, a Bill on combat knives, and greater supervision of police bugging.

But Mr Blair still has to win an election before he can govern the country. Labour does not assume power from the Conservatives this year as if it were Luxembourg taking over the presidency of the European Union from The Netherlands. If business leaders are queuing up to back the Opposition, they are doing so on the balance of probabilities. As any bookmaker knows, a racing certainty can easily be defeated.

Mr Blair must be assuming that, once momentum builds up behind a party, it can attract voters who want to be associated with the winning side. And, when a party has been out of office for 18 years, there is clearly a benefit to be gained from looking ready for government. But there is a countervailing effect too. Britons are famously sympathetic to underdogs; and equally intolerant of presumption.

The line between looking prime ministerial and seeming complacent is very thin. Mr Blair rightly tells his party that voters should not be taken for granted. He would not be human if he did not secretly revel in the attention and approbation which is being showered upon him by former foes. But he should be careful not to let it show too much.

WAR OF THE GREENS

Vegetables can be interesting, but are not the only virtuous food

Parents are said to have lost the battle over what children eat. Yesterday's report from Strathclyde University asserts that new generations of children are being exposed to a greater risk of cancer because they are bulging their parents into letting them eat whatever they want. The report is interpreted as an indictment of official healthy eating campaigns. It criticises schools for letting pupils pick junk food. And it asserts that Christmas lunch is the only meal in the year at which children receive an adequate intake of vegetables. This assertion begs the question of whether children consider Brussels sprouts and parsnips to be edible vegetables in the strict acceptance of both terms.

Now it is obvious that parents (and nannies in households that have them) exercise less tyrannical authority over the table than once they did. This is one of the few areas of their lives that children control, because they have the power to refuse to eat. And there is statistical evidence that people, including children, are growing fatter: especially in the Western world, especially in the United States, especially in the poorer families. Anecdotal evidence suggests that children live on crisps and sweets, cereals and spaghetti rings. And *Economist* figures for 1997 show that household consumption of fresh green vegetables has fallen from 406 grammes per person per week to 245 grammes 30 years later. So the old tribal exhortation to eat up one's greens, accompanied by vague threats, no longer simply falls on reluctant ears. It is not even uttered.

But parents have always projected their fears and obsessions on their children. And our current dietary fads stem partly from the admirable modern craze for healthy living, and partly from folk memories of war and rationing. But today's diet experts who live off the fat of the land would disapprove of previously approved British regimes of fortifying bread and dripping and suet puddings. Greens and other vegetables contain vitamins, nutrients and roughage essential to healthy growth. But then so do plenty of other foods now available.

During the same period in which the statistics find that average consumption of fresh green vegetables declined, consumption of fresh fruit and frozen vegetables rose sharply. (This latest research into children's diets was funded by a frozen food company and the Cancer Research Campaign.) Supermarketing has brought to the shelves vegetables that were considered exotic weeds a generation ago, and keeps them there through every season. Modern cooking has found tastier recipes for vegetables than boiling them to pulp. And salads of a variety undreamt of a generation ago are a favourite dish — of teenage girls at least.

The human body is a magnificently adaptable machine. Provided that the body is kept active, a naturally healthy hunger will usually find a healthy diet. So the changing fads of the experts should always be taken with a pinch of salt. And children should be encouraged to develop their own tastes. These could well include vegetables.

Aims of those who took UK into EEC

From Mr Norman Lamont, MP for Kingston-upon-Thames (Conservative)

Sir, Sir Edward Heath's letter (January 18) see also letters, January 21) is unconvincing. In 1972, Sir Geoffrey Howe, then the Solicitor-General responsible for taking the European Communities Bill through the House, said:

Let us remind ourselves of the original Treaties of Rome and Paris. They set out, essentially, to establish a "Common Market". It is this basically simple economic concept — the establishment of a single market, a single trading area throughout Europe — that is at the heart of the Community.

There was not much mention here of a directly elected Parliament, a European passport, European citizenship or a single currency.

The 1971 White Paper stated: "There is no question of any erosion of essential national sovereignty." It did go on to say that the EEC involved "a sharing and enlargement of national sovereignty". Thus the White Paper gave the impression of defending national sovereignty to disguise the true position, and enable its advocates to assert that only inessential sovereignty was being handed over.

It is completely misleading to say that sovereignty is being enlarged; "pooling" national sovereignty self-evidently means it is being given away. No wonder ordinary people lose patience with such sophistry and feel betrayed.

Sir Edward Heath seems to confuse sovereignty with power. They are not the same thing. Sovereignty is the freedom to make your own laws for your own people through your own parliament. That right is being rapidly eroded and on a scale certainly never revealed to the British people in the early 1970s.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN LAMONT,
House of Commons.
January 21.

From Lord Belfoff

Sir, By quoting from a silly little book I wrote as a cloistered monk nearly 30 years ago, Professor Bogdanor (letter, January 21) has proved that I once held the same foolish views as Sir Edward Heath.

The difference is that observation of the European and world scene over the intervening period has led me to repent of my folly: Sir Edward remains mired in his.

Yours truly,
BELLOFF,
House of Lords.
January 21.

From Mr J. A. Davis

Sir, Lord Belfoff's view (letter, January 19) is that there was a positive intention, at the time Britain joined the Common Market, to secure our participation in a federal or "superstate", and that this was due to pessimism in a section of the British elite about our ability to operate as a successful nation state.

The essentially federal nature of the EEC and the aspiration of the original members to press on to ever greater unity had been on public display for over 20 years before we joined, as Sir Edward Heath has made clear. The European Court of Justice had proclaimed the supremacy of Community law two years before we joined. It has taken, so it seems, a further 20 years for us to wake up to what we did.

When one considers what that says about the honesty and competence of the mother of Parliaments and the alertness of what is supposed to be one of the most sophisticated electorates in the world, it rather suggests that that pessimism was totally justified.

I was not deceived and voted to come out in 1975. I would not repeat that mistake today.

Yours faithfully,
J. A. DAVIS,
54 Woodlands Road,
Bookham, Surrey.
January 18.

From Mr Patrick Howard

Sir, Sir Edward Heath dismisses Lord Belfoff's fear that "policies dreamed up elsewhere" could ruin the livelihoods of many UK citizens by citing the UK's achievement in having the best employment record in the Union.

I would maintain that this has been achieved only through our opting out of Union policies on the ERM, the social chapter and the minimum wage.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK HOWARD,
37 Ennerdale Road,
Kew, Richmond, Surrey.
January 18.

Vote on bugging

From Mrs Sally Flintoff

Sir, The vote by the Upper House to overturn that part of the Police Bill relating to bugging (report, January 21) illustrates why the House of Lords should remain in being. Its role as a valuable checking device on the Government should not be underestimated.

We all want the police to have sufficient means to detect crime, but not at any price.

Yours faithfully,
SALLY FLINTOFF,
1 Royal Crescent Mews, W11.
January 21.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Rail privatisation 'a costly mistake'

From the General Secretary of the RMT

Sir, It is to be expected that Secretary of State Sir George Young (letter, January 17) would claim railway privatisation is working, but it is ironic that on the day he makes claims about increased investment we learn that for the second time in a month John Swift, the Rail Regulator, has been forced to criticise Railtrack for under-investment in maintenance (report, Business News).

In its half-year accounts Railtrack identified £760 million of backlog work in vital station/property maintenance but had spent just £11 million. It is still spending considerably less on day-to-day track/signalling maintenance than the £800 million a year it claimed was necessary in 1995, just to stand still.

Sir George refers to "investment commitments". These do not amount to actual spending as Railtrack proves. The Secretary of State says that "a billion pounds (will be spent) over 10 years" (ie, £100 million a year) in replacing and refurbishing rolling stock. To put this in perspective, Department of Transport statistics show that over the last decade of public ownership the Conservative Government spent on average £275 million a

year on rolling stock. Even if additional investment in new rolling stock is forthcoming it will be far too late to save the UK-based rolling-stock industry.

Support for the privatised railway this financial year is likely to be £1,760 million. By 2000 Opra!, the rail franchiser, forecast last November that support will have fallen to £1,260 million. In the last year of the integrated railway, 1993-94, BR received £1,073 million, including grant from Passenger Transport Executives. Can we afford any more success of this kind?

Despite an increase in grant of 60 per cent there is just no evidence of real improvements in services. Much of the data on timekeeping, for example, is spurious. Yet, there can be little doubt that the old integrated railway, given these additional resources, would have provided substantial, long-term improvements.

Far from being a "modest success" (leading article, January 13) railway privatisation is already proving to be a very costly mistake.

Yours sincerely,
JAMES KNAPP, General Secretary,
National Union of Rail,
Maritime & Transport Workers,
Unity House, Euston Road, NW1,
January 17.

Banking on pay of £1 million a year

From Mr Paul Ashton

Sir, William Rees-Mogg claims (article, January 20) that Nicola Horlick, the £1 million-a-year bank employee, was "almost certainly worth a great deal more to the bank than they were paying her". This is based on his assumption that perhaps 5 per cent of the capital value of the bank, equal to £75 million, might be attributed to Mrs Horlick's "personal contribution".

Such unscientific, if not bogus, calculations about the worth of an individual's contribution to the profitability of an organisation are frequently used to justify enormous salaries and bonuses. They are meaningless because they assume, in my view quite wrongly, that the organisation could not employ someone else who would perform at least as well for, say, half the financial reward.

Over-inflated salaries and bonus rates exist purely because of the self-interest of fellow-executives, who know that by suggesting them they will benefit too. Entrepreneurs who risk all they have deserve high rewards; salaried employees are worth no more than the lowest amount an equally skilled and productive person would accept to do the job.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL ASHTON,
37 Benbow Avenue, Langney Point,
Eastbourne, East Sussex.

From Mr James McFarlane

Sir, Whether William Rees Mogg's article accurately reflects what happens

in the City, I cannot say; but it does seem to me that fund managers are in a position to have a one-way bet at their clients' expense.

What they win on the swings in their lucky years, they do not have to pay back on the roundabouts, when fortune (or skill) deserts them. They are fortunate to be paid millions for placing the bets.

Yours very truly,
JAMES MCFARLANE,
24 Broad Street,
Ludlow, Shropshire.
January 20.

From Mr E. Guy Abel

Sir, Pennington (Business News, January 21) queries whether Mrs Horlick is really superhuman to raise five children on £1 million. It is hard for us males to judge this fairly but surely the question is whether it is remarkable to earn £1 million whilst raising five children.

Yours faithfully,
E. GUY ABEL,
Chimney Mill, West Stow,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.
January 21.

From Mr P. Best

Sir, Would it be possible for one of your media persons to explain the difference between a "fat cat" and a "superwoman"?

Yours faithfully,
P. BEST,
126 Roe Lane, Southport, Merseyside.
January 18.

Arab/Israel agreement

From Sir Cyril Townsend, MP for Bexleyheath (Conservative)

Sir, While I share your relief that an agreement has been reached between Israel and the Palestinian Authority which should move the peace process forward, I must disagree with your leading article, "Peace in their time" (January 16), in one respect.

The peace process should not be rushed, certainly, but it must be pushed forward as quickly as possible. The situation will not simply stand still while talks proceed; there remains a serious danger of it deteriorating and destroying the peace process.

The Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip feel that they are living under siege because of the contin-

ued closure of those areas. Their unemployment is around 50 per cent in many places and living standards are deteriorating.

Such factors, linked to dissatisfaction over the limited character of the concessions made thus far by Israel, mean that the pursuit of a final settlement acceptable to the Palestinian people should be seen as a matter of urgency. This should certainly not preclude dealing seriously with all the outstanding issues in the peace process.

Yours faithfully,
CYRIL TOWNSEND
(Director),
Council for the Advancement of
Arab-British Understanding,
21 Collingham Road, SW5,
January 17.

Public grief

From Mr Ronald Thwaites, QC

Sir, I wholeheartedly agree with Sir Anthony Beaumont-Dark (letter, January 14) that it is time for a return to restraint and decency in the treatment of the families of the victims of crime. It has become routine to see dishevelled and visibly emotional relatives of recently murdered victims and lost children paraded before a posse of journalists and TV cameras by the police in an appeal for witnesses to come forward.

First, that is not the job of the bereaved. Second, it is unlikely that they are thinking clearly enough to be able to make a rational decision about the wisdom of taking part in such spectacles. Third, they cannot contribute anything other than their tragic demeanour to the investigation of the case. Fourth, what price sensitivity to their feelings?

Do the police believe that we as a nation have become so hardened that we have become immune to the daily diet of horrors that take place; or that we cannot imagine the grief of the parents for their dead children, or spouses for their dead partners, without seeing it for ourselves; or that it is now expected that the bereaved practise their grief in public before witnesses are persuaded to come forward? Have we become such a sick and callous society?

Yours faithfully,
RONALD THWAITES,
10 King's Bench Walk, Temple, EC4.

Winning books

From Mr James Willis

Sir, "Britain's favourite books: the top 100" (report, January 20): 33. *Remembrance of Things Past* Marcel Proust.

34. *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory* Roald Dahl.

Would you be prepared to offer a small prize to the reader who can supply a better example of bathos, in any medium or context?

Yours faithfully,
JAMES WILLIS,
Ashwell Farmhouse,
Ilminster, Somerset.
January 21.

Unspeakable offer

From Mrs C. M. Upton

Sir, A catalogue of rare books received at this house today is offering us *The Gollywog's Fox-hunt* (published 1905). Is this the least politically-correct title currently available?

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTINE M. UPTON,
20 Yew Tree Gardens,
Harrogate, North Yorkshire.
January 17.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Conflict over Chief Rabbi's gesture

From Mr Barry Hyman

Sir, Your editorial, "A brother's hand" (January 18), praising Rabbi Jonathan Sacks's intention to attend the memorial meeting for Rabbi Hugo Gryn on February 30 will sadly make no impression on, and almost certainly be unread by, those frightened people who oppose the arrangement.

To the many thousands of us who have already paid tribute to Rabbi Gryn at his funeral or the subsequent memorial service, the presence of Rabbi Sacks at a secular gathering is a matter of some indifference. It is nonetheless a belated conciliatory gesture, for which he is to be congratulated, particularly when one sees the wrath it engenders against him from the ultra-orthodox Jewish community — from which I exclude the vast majority of modern British observant United Synagogue Jews. They were mostly no less distressed by Rabbi Sacks's absence from Rabbi Gryn's funeral than Reform Jews, as the *Jewish Chronicle's* letters page showed at the time.

Sadly the Jewish community, now numbering less than 300,000, still contains people whose capacity to revile their co-religionists defies belief. An ultra-orthodox rabbi recently condemned, in a radio interview, a non-orthodox group as "criminals as sinners, creating *mamzerim* (illegitimate children) for ten generations". This is the sort of self-destructive invective which faces Rabbi Sacks each time he makes any sort of gesture towards non-orthodox Jews.

Yours faithfully,
BARRY HYMAN,
4 Priory View,
Bushey Heath, Hertfordshire.
January 18.

From Mr Richard Bacon

Sir, Rabbi Hugo Gryn was a good and wise man who touched many people beyond his own faith. Those who profoundly disagreed with him on theological questions might reflect on what the Chief Rabbi said in his 1990 Rethel lectures:

To have faith in God as creator and ruler of the universe is to do more than to believe that God has spoken to us. It is to believe that God has spoken to others, in a language which we may not understand.

RICHARD BACON,
86 Gloucester Street, SW1,
January 14.

In the steps of Todd

From Mr M. G. de St V. Atkins

Sir, There was, of course, a difference between the late Lord Todd and the Almighty (letters, January 16, 18). It was recorded in a limerick, told me by an American tribologist; he said that it was current in Christ's when he was an undergraduate there, in the early 1960s:

Doesn't it strike you as odd
That a commonplace fellow like Todd
Should spell, if you please,
His name with two Ds,
When one is sufficient for God?

Yours sincerely,
M. G. de St V. ATKINS,
Cross House, Whittington,
Nr Carnforth, Lancashire.

From Mr W. B. H. Lord

Sir, At Cambridge there was a certain amount of rivalry between Todd's chemistry department and the physics department, where the Cavendish Professor was the distinguished solid-state physicist, Sir Nevill Mort.

Todd's somewhat forceful personality gave rise to the jingle:

A. R. Todd
Thinks he's Codd.
N. F. Mort
Says he's not.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM LORD,
2 Orchard Brae, Edinburgh.
January 18.

Checkout spies

From Mr Joseph Collins

Sir, I received today a voucher, redeemable at Tesco's, for £1 off my next bottle of Three Barrels brandy. It was addressed to me personally "as a Three Barrels drinker".

It was most welcome but — and this is a disturbing thought — how did they know me? The only bottle of this brandy I have ever had came home a week ago in my wife's Tesco shopping — one item on a £10n bill. To Tesco she is Mrs E. Collins. They don't know me from Adam. She might have been a widow or, perish the thought, have been buying brandy for a secret lover.

Confidentiality means little in these plastic card and junk-mail days.

Yours faithfully,
JOSEPH COLLINS,
22 Cardinal Court, Grand Avenue,
Worthing, West Sussex.
January 15.

Undercover message

From Mr R. W. Dubell

Sir, I would suggest that if Mrs Beryl Wakefield (letter, January 18) wishes all things to remain the same, she votes Conservative and wears her Marks & Spencer briefs back to front.

Yours,
R. W. DUBELL,
The Rosary,
Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire.
January 20.

PROFESSOR JAMES CROSS

nationalist and admire like a 19th-century hero; there clearly was great and whatever its inaccuracies, profound, might have been, the Life came on further acquaintance herald of a new and very good sort of novel, written by a woman, well-informed, based on judicious selection of available authorities, but reading as if it were a first-hand account.

ographical study on anything like Elizabeth's "Elizabeth of Essex".

The narrative was even clearer than the previous books, and the mackerel clear. The portrait of Elizabeth is more our reading of the facts, and the Victoria a dictation; and the text owes still more to his scheme of the only sort of character which could have faced the results, in these days of Philip of Spain and others, may indeed be the whole truth; but a vivid narrative in which there is falsification and a great deal of construction.

Tracy's other books, composed of letters, are there is some attractive and interesting material, but the dramatic and ... Such a mind as his, in its ability to thrill learning, its acute sensitive wit, and its power of effort have been counted upon to achieve results in the future.

Where £1 million is not enough

Nicola Horlock, the City "superwoman", is hoping to move from her £1.25 million home in Kensington to a new £3 million house in The Little Boltons, Chelsea. Her existing home is too small, she says, and her youngest child Antonia has to sleep in the drawing room.

Therein lies a truth about the top end of London's housing market: large family houses in the centre of town have gone through the £1 million mark.

The Norland nanny, Gucci-clad, Range Rover-driving brigade want low-built, five or six-bedroom freehold houses with private gardens, easy access to communal gardens, garages, good security and staff accommodation in Chelsea, Knightsbridge, Belgrave, Kensington, Hampstead, St John's Wood or Notting Hill Gate. They can now expect to pay a minimum of around £1.5 million for their desires.

"This has only just happened," says Anthony Lassman, a long-time specialist in the so-called "unreal" market of super-expensive houses. "In the boom years of 1983 and 1984, buyers with £1 million to spend could expect to find a very good family house in these areas. By the late 1980s, the best houses started to cost a bit more. Then prices fell back, and it was not until last year that they rose again significantly. Now prices have surpassed those of the late 1980s because demand has outstripped supply. You can expect to pay anything from £2.75 million to £5 million."

Knight Frank's latest figures show that prime London prices rose by 17.6 per cent last year.

"People with £1 million in the bank imagine it will buy them a home of palatial proportions in the perfect location," says Willie Gething of the buying agency Property Vision. "It comes as a bit of a shock when they discover the truth. What they want and what they can get are no longer the same thing."

Mr Gething says that prices have been forced over the million mark because London has become the financial capital of Europe. "The city's international appeal is tremendous," he says. Foreign buyers compete and win against their British counterparts. While France and Germany struggle with recession and high taxes, London is on the cover of *Newsweek*.

Knight Frank estimates that a third of its sales are now made to European buyers, compared with 13 per cent a year ago. British buyers account for just 38 per cent of sales.

"More and more British buyers with a million to spend are moving

Until recently, a seven-figure sum would secure almost any property you desired, even in the exclusive avenues of Chelsea, Hampstead or Knightsbridge. Not any more, says Rachel Kelly



Almost suitable: You might assume that for almost a million (£985,000), 11 St James's Gardens would qualify as the perfect London family house. But the copiousness might reject its lack of a communal garden at the back (guaranteeing security and the right kind of neighbour), and the fact that it is on the periphery of ultra-smart London. It may be close to Notting Hill, but does not lie within the "golden triangle" of top metropolitan addresses.



Eminently suitable: Also for sale through John D. Wood, 54 Lansdowne Road is in the exclusive nexus of streets to the west of Ladbroke Grove in Notting Hill, west London. It satisfies all the "must-have" requirements of the very rich: a communal garden accessible from the back of the house, where Norland nannies can swap details of their pay cheques; plus the period features, including high ceilings, demanded by top bankers for their corporate entertaining. The price? £1.3 million.

south of the river or out of the centre," says Mr Gething. David Forbes, from the agents Chesterfield, agrees that the rich now have to consider what was once thought of as "tiger country".

"Day after day I get requests for a five-bedroom family house with a garden and off-street parking in a prime location with a price tag of £1 million," he says. "Well, the two are incompatible. You must either find more to spend or consider Wandsworth or Putney."

The heart of central London is

being taken over by the richest of American and European investment bankers who can muscle their way to the top deals. Other, more junior, bank employees are having to rent while they continue their search.

Adam Carey, from Friend & Falcke's Chelsea office, says: "Whereas a typical family house in Paulinas Square, Chelsea, would have cost £1,100 a week last year, now you would be looking at £1,300 a week."

This is essentially a City phenom-

enon led by the mergers and acquisitions boys, says Stephen Newbold, a partner with Knight Frank. "The City boom, plus an upturn in confidence, has mopped up much of the supply of freehold houses in Kensington and Chelsea."

Buyers are picky. Take two houses, both for sale at around the million mark through John D. Wood: one in Carlyle Square, Chelsea; and one in St James's Gardens, W11. Despite the high asking prices, neither is quite right

for the discerning family buyer. Both are too small, one has no parking and the St James's house is perceived to be on the periphery of central London, especially by foreign buyers.

Or take the example of a house in Old Church Street, London SW3, on sale for £1.15 million through Chestertons Residential. The agents say it is on the small side for the perfect family home, and will sell as a top-flight "bachelor pad" instead.

The boundaries acceptable for top London houses are precise, says Ian Homersham of John D. Wood. Buyers chiefly want to be in three areas: parts of Kensington, parts of Belgrave and parts of Chelsea.

In Kensington, buyers want to live in Holland Villas Road or Addison Road, two avenues of mainly detached, double-fronted Victorian houses with in-and-out drives to the west of Holland Park, where prices top £4 million. Houses with good private gardens backing on to communal gardens to the north of Holland Park start at £2.5 million; mid 19th-century to late 19th-century stucco-fronted houses on long leases in Phillimore Gardens and Essex Villas cost from £1.75 million to £3.5 million; and houses on or leading off Victoria Road to the south of Kensington High Street cost between £2 million and £3 million.

In Belgrave, houses are acceptable in Eaton Square, Wilton Crescent, Chester Square and Belgrave Square. In Chelsea, Cheyne Gardens, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea Park Gardens and Chelsea Square fit the bill, as do parts of the Boltons, Tregunter Road and Little Boltons.

In Hampstead, Church Row and Hampstead Square are the most sought-after addresses for Georgian period homes.

Prices are precisely defined, too. Jonathan Hewlett from Savills says that suitable family houses now start at £1.25 million in Chelsea and £1.4 million in Knightsbridge.

Of course, the market for such properties is tiny. Land Registry figures show there were just 44 sales of houses valued at between £1 million and £1.25 million between July and September last year, and only ten sales of £2 million or above.

But the high price of houses in the centre of London ripples outwards, raising the prices of houses in the suburbs and making those in the centre well nigh unaffordable. We may complain but, as Willie Gething concludes: "If you think that London is expensive, look at the prices for comparable properties in Manhattan, Tokyo — or Bombay."



Homeward bound: a deer hunter at Gaick returns with his kill

Luggage man is new monarch of the glen

One of Scotland's pre-eminent sporting estates has been sold to the Vuitton family, founders of the French luggage empire, for more than £2 million.

Gaick, at Glen Tromie in the Grampians, is best known for the paintings of the wildlife artist Archibald Thorburn, most notably his *Sunrise over Gaick*. Mr Thorburn first visited the estate in 1899 and painted piannigan, grouse, golden eagles, hares and red deer there.

Gaick Lodge, built in about 1820 and one of the oldest sporting properties in Scotland, lies at the heart of the 18,225-acre estate and is nine miles from the nearest neighbours, although there is a bothy attached to the back of the property and a stalker's house near by. The small town of Kingussie lies 14 miles away.

Xavier Vuitton is a keen sportsman who plans to run the estate — the rugged landscape of which rises to just under 3,000 feet at its highest point — on traditional lines.

"Gaick boasts an average of 97 stags and 175 hinds, as well as grouse and rough shooting, and trout and salmon fishing in the lochs and the River Tromie," says Allan Macpherson-Fletcher from agents Strutt & Parker, who sold the property.

"Keeping the estate going takes a lot of work — it could cost £60,000 to £80,000 a year to run. The only profits to be had are from selling venison to game dealers, or issuing game licences."

Passed over by the Duke of Gordon during the Highland Clearances in the 18th century because of its fine deer herd, Gaick was a favourite hunting ground of

Queen Victoria, who often stayed there when she was visiting Balmoral.

For the past 100 years, visitors to the Lodge have carved their names in the dining room's pine panelling. Archibald Thorburn and another great 19th-century artist, Sir Edwin Landseer, have both left their marks.

Gaick has a past both illustrious and mysterious. After the catastrophic defeat of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion at Culloden, the clans rallied 10 miles from Gaick, awaiting a further call to arms from Bonnie Prince Charlie. But the Prince had already fled.

A far more sinister event, known in local folklore as *Call Ghlig* or "the Gaick catastrophe", occurred 55 years after Culloden. Mr Macpherson-Fletcher, whose own estate lies not far from Gaick, says: "In January 1800, an avalanche swept away the old lodge at Gaick during a deer-stalking party led by Captain John Macpherson of Bullachroan — no relation to me — who was known as 'the black officer'. When villagers went to investigate, they are said to have found the party frozen to death around a card table, even though the whole lodge had been swept away."

"They say they had been playing cards with the Devil, as Macpherson was known to bully people into joining the King's army."

More recently, the estate was run along traditional lines by four friends who owned it for the past 25 years. But they are in their seventies now, Mr Macpherson-Fletcher says, and felt it was time to pass it on to a younger generation.

AMANDA LOOSE

Curbs on new building are a blow to the homeless

In her second article on homelessness, Rachel Kelly looks at the lack of funds for social housing.

Sir Brian Pease is normally mild in his comments. Yet when the Government announced its latest public housing cuts in last year's Budget, the chairman of the Housing Corporation, the organisation which funds low-cost homes, railed that the decision would have "devastating results for homeless people".

"Without satisfying housing needs, it is difficult to see how government policies to improve people's health, minimise crime, meet children's educational needs and boost employment prospects can succeed," Sir Brian said.

Yet because public housing is neither a hot political issue nor a hot media issue — chiefly because most journalists own their own homes — his remarks went almost unreported. David Curry, in his three years as Housing Minister, has not faced a single opposition day debate on the matter.

But Sir Brian is not alone. Other housing experts are also warning us that government cuts in public housing will have devastating results for homeless people this year.

"We are going to face a crisis in the number of people in temporary accommodation — which already stands at 43,000 families," says John Perry, the director of policy at the Chartered Institute of Housing. "We are building the lowest number of new homes since rebuilding started after the war. And the number of homes to be let to those on low incomes will fall short of the Government's own targets."

In last year's Budget, grants for social housing were cut from £1.06 billion in 1996-97 to £650 million for 1997-98. The Government also cut local authority repairs and renovation budgets by £250 million. This means the housing programme has taken a 30 per cent capital cut in real terms, by far the largest cut of any government programme. The National Housing Federation, which represents housing associations, says that the worst-



Lucky: housing association tenants the Higginses

FRANK HIGGINS, a fitter, lives with his wife Catalina and sons Frank Jr, eight, Andrew, four, and Paul, one, in a two-bedroom flat on the Rootes Estate near Ladbroke Grove in west London. The family's rent is subsidised by the Notting Hill Housing Trust, whose programme this year is likely to be 480 new housing units. Cuts mean that next

hit region will be the North, which will lose 1,280 homes — a 64 per cent cut in new social housing. London will lose 7,000 homes.

Analysts claim the cuts represent an abandonment of the Government's stated target of building 60,000 new homes each year in order to meet minimum housing needs.

Jim Coulter, the chief executive of the NHF, says: "The Government has failed abysmally. Earlier this year, David Curry defended his minimum target to the Environmental Select Committee against criticism that it was too low. "He

now seems to have abandoned even that target."

Housing organisations claim that in fact, 100,000 new homes need to be built every year to cope with growing demand — especially from single people.

Only last year the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, said that 4.4 million homes needed to be built in Britain during the next two decades. "In that context the Budget cuts make no sense at all," says Christine Laird, the Chartered Institute of Housing's chief executive.

Mr Curry defends the Gov-

ernment's estimates. "The latest evidence of continued growth in private rented housing and home ownership shows that we are right to provide social housing at the lower end of our range of estimates," he says.

The Government estimates that it will be building 43,000 new homes a year by the end of the decade. "In previous years far more than 60,000 new lettings were built — so by the end of the decade the Government's target will have been met," a spokesman for the Department of the Environment says. "Besides the £2.5 billion provided by the Government for housing associations, we will be expecting nearly £2 billion in private finance for social lettings. And since the Budget, local authorities are able to use 25 per cent of receipts from the sale of council houses to reinvest in their housing stock."

Other funding for social housing comes from the Estates Renewal Challenge Fund, which helps to meet the cost of transferring council houses to new landlords. It was announced in the Budget that the fund would receive an extra £70 million in the next three years.

But experts dismiss the Government's figures. "The target which was set was based on performance over the past ten years," Mr Perry says. "To go back to earlier figures and take them into account is illogical."

"The cuts make it difficult to bring in new money. For every £1 cut from the public sector, we lose £1 from the private sector because we cannot underpin the value of housing programmes."

The reality of cuts will hit the 11 million people who live in local authority housing. Council houses nationwide are rotting because of reduced maintenance and repair budgets, and the need for inner-city regeneration means that politicians — and journalists — surely cannot ignore the pressing social housing problem for much longer.

Additional research by Gautam Malkani

10p

THE TIMES

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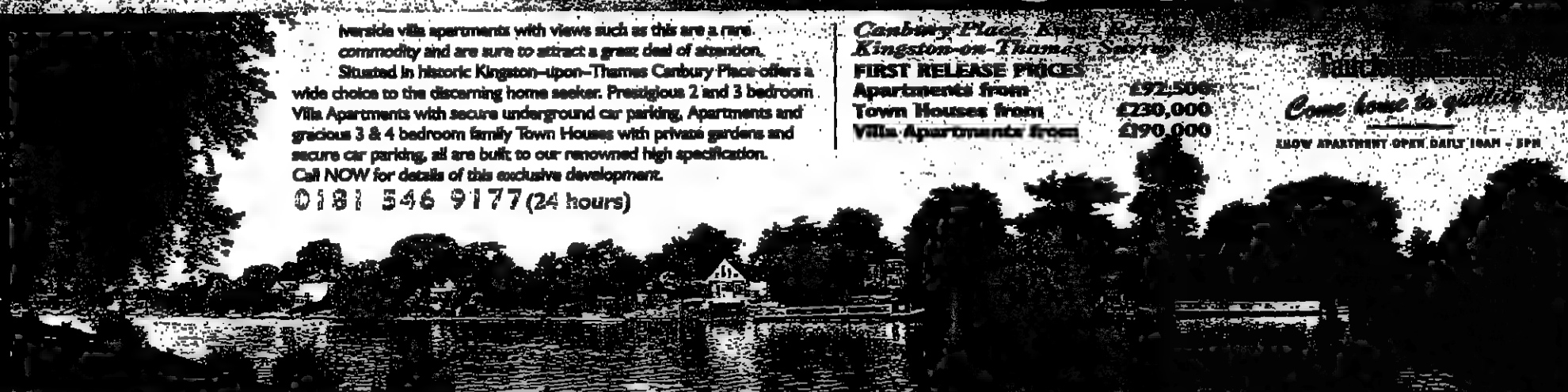
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Offering for contracting or weekly/semi-weekly rental. 1 bed, 1 shower plus garden and parking.
Guide price £148,800.
Tel: 0171 3510966.

WANDSWORTH
Common SW12
Large semi-detached house, 5 bed, 3 reception, 2 bathroom, kitchen, 2 toilets, garden, parking. Close to schools, bus, and shopping. No agents.
Tel: 0181 672 1317.

THE ROYALS EAST SHEEN
2 bed/2 reception cottage, with garden, £165,000.
Tel: 0181 878 2092

BELGRAVIA

SW1
Spectacular property in exclusive, quiet Belgrave Place, Apartment 2001. It is on 2 floors. Garage, up, large dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, guest bedroom, 1st floor 4 double bedrooms, an en-suite bathroom.

DOCKLANDS

FULHAM

CITY & WEST END

MODERN TOWNHOUSE
Off the Kings Road.
1 ground floor, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, 1 kitchen, 1 living room, 1 study, 1 terrace, 1 garden, 1 parking space. This property is a rare opportunity to buy a modern townhouse in a prime location. Price £1,200,000.

HAMPSTEAD

BRISTOL

SURREY

ASHTED
A superb detached house in a prime location. 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, 1 kitchen, 1 living room, 1 study, 1 terrace, 1 garden, 1 parking space. Price £1,200,000.

SUSSEX

SHEPHERD PARK
A superb detached house in a prime location. 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, 1 kitchen, 1 living room, 1 study, 1 terrace, 1 garden, 1 parking space. Price £1,200,000.

NEWS

Heseltine names Labour 'front men'

Michael Heseltine enraged some of Britain's top businessmen by accusing them of being front men for the Labour Party and of writing a politically motivated report.

Having demanded an invitation to speak at a conference to be addressed by Tony Blair, he insulted his hosts by claiming that the whole event was a "set up" to give the illusion that Labour had business support. Pages 1, 2

Whitehall let UK firm sell arms to Hutus

An inquiry has found that the Government failed to implement all the requirements of a UN arms embargo on Rwanda, which allowed a British company to supply weapons to extremist Hutu militia. Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, admitted in a Commons answer that the UN arms embargo was not implemented in the Isle of Man. Page 1

Del Boy blamed

Del Boy and Rodney were singled out as prime examples of the lowbrow culture undermining school standards by the Chief Inspector of Schools. Page 1

Cards anger sceptics

Euro-sceptics reacted angrily to proposals to introduce a European smartcard as an identity document. Page 2

Doctor struck off

A heart surgeon who was questioned about the murder of his former flatmate was struck off after the General Medical Council heard that he had "wriggled and squirmed and lied". Page 3

Bugging compromise

Michael Howard is considering a compromise to ensure that the Police Bill gets through the Commons after the Lords voted against his plans for the bugging of suspects. Page 4

Dial C for change

Eight million telephone users were told that they would need new numbers, barely two years after being promised that they would never have to change again. Page 5

Child sex abuse

Children living in care homes in North Wales during the 1970s and 1980s were subjected to physical and sexual abuse "bordering on wholesale exploitation", an inquiry was told. Page 6

Men give way to women on the road

Women drivers have earned the respect of all but the most die-hard chauvinists. Since 1988 the proportion of men claiming that they are better drivers than women has fallen from 35 per cent to 24 per cent, says the ninth Lex report on motoring. The proportion of women who believe they are better drivers has risen from 45 per cent to 54 per cent. Page 3

Prison drug riot

A crackdown on drug abuse probably sparked 12 hours of rioting in a top security prison which caused damage costing an estimated £500,000. Page 8

Hunting support

Melvyn Bragg, caused fury in the Labour Party by dismissing its pledge to ban hunting as "sloppy thinking". Page 9

Roar for Gore

When Al Gore skipped on to the stage of the Washington Ball, America's Vice-President was unable to contain his excitement as thousands of Democrats chanted "Gore in 2000". Page 10

Holy alliance

Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority are working together for the first time to capitalise on last week's Hebron agreement to boost tourism to the Holy Land. Page 11

Museums accused

France's state auditors have accused national museum officials of failing in their legal duty to seek the rightful owners of 2,000 artworks stolen from Jews during the war. Page 12

End of the code

"Adieu morse." At midnight on January 31 the maritime listening post on Brittany's coast will stop receiving Morse Code messages as France abandons the signal system. Page 13



Nominees for the top Laurence Olivier Awards, Paul Scofield, Eileen Atkins, Janet McTeer and David Suchet, at the National Theatre

BUSINESS

Economy: The CBI revealed the first damage of the high pound to industry. It said lower exports and slower growth had to be considered in the decision on whether interest rates should rise. Page 25

Motoring: Nissan, the Japanese car maker, is to create 800 jobs at its Sunderland factory through the production of a new saloon car and 2,700 more jobs are expected at car component factories. Page 25

Nicola Horlock: The Morgan Grenfell star fund manager said yesterday that her chances of getting her job back were slim. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 rose 1.5 to 4195.5. Sterling rose from 96.8 to 96.9 after a fall from \$1.6630 to \$1.6622 but a rise from DM2.7004 to DM2.7006. Page 28

SPORT

Rugby union: Scotland have made seven changes to their side for the match against England. Gregor Townsend switches from centre to stand-off half. Page 48

Football: Northern Ireland have called in Jon McCarthy, the Port Vale midfielder, to bolster their weakened squad for the match against Italy in Palermo. Page 48

Tennis: Mary Pierce reached the semi-finals of the Australian Open with a three-set victory over Sabine Appelmans. She will meet Amanda Coetzer, who easily beat Kimberley Poole. Page 46

Cricket: Alan Lee writes that, of all the significant nations in the cricket world, New Zealand stand alone in treating England with a deference they hardly deserve. Page 43

ARTS

Colony culture: Just five months before Hong Kong is handed over to China, the British Council unveils its new £11 million headquarters in anticipation of an even bigger role ahead. Page 35

Guitar mart: The guitarist Paco Peña brings his flamenco troupe back for a month-long residency at Sadler's Wells Peacock Theatre and tells Joanna Pitman why he is happy to be here again. Page 35

Crowing: For an old-fashioned rock band in their prime catch the Black Crowes, now on tour after a rousing gig in Cambridge. Page 36

Eplo opera: As the Royal Opera rehearses Hans Pfitzner's *Palestrina* for its first staging in this country, the director Nikolaus Lehnhoff explains its appeal. Page 37

OPINION

Love in the Nineties: What exercises us to the root of our being? Page 15

Nigel Lawson says it is - underachieving at school, unwanted at work - who may be the second sex. Page 15

Fantasy: Galliano and McQueen are breaking new ground in haute couture - just as Yves Saint Laurent did. Page 14

Shopping: Mothers should go on a clothes-buying spree before their first child is born - they may never get another chance. Page 14

Not any more: If you think you can buy a large family home with the garden in the centre of London for £1m, you are wrong. Page 21

Too silly: Channel 4's new series, *Fortean TV*, takes on the myths and miracles. Page 33

Shakeup: If Radio 4 really needs changing, says Brenda Maddox, then dump *The Archers*. Page 32

Will France be capable of reforming its justice system? The time has certainly come. At least everyone is in agreement that the French justice system has been in a moral crisis since the 1980s. *La Figaro*

Preview: The joke may finally be over for the Reliant Robin. *Trouble At the Top* (BBC2, 9.50pm). Review: Matthew Bond on Harold Pinter. Page 47

Germany looks east

Nothing would be crueler than to encourage these countries to prepare for EU membership while holding up their exports at the frontier and their aspirations at the negotiating table. Page 17

Perils of triumphalism

If business leaders are queuing up to back the Opposition, they are doing so on the balance of probabilities. Page 17

War of the greens

The human body is a magnificently adaptable machine. Provided that the body is kept active, a naturally healthy hunger will usually find a healthy diet. Page 17

SIMON JENKINS

The voluntary principle that began Barnardo's 112 homes was a good one. There is no evidence that the State has any unique competence in caring for children. Page 16

SUE CAMERON

The Conservative MEP Graham Mather is among those who believe Britain needs a "Department for Europe" headed by a Cabinet minister. Page 16

PETER RIDDELL

Mr Heseltine's over-the-top response was not only politically misjudged but underlines how hard the Tories are finding it to grapple with the adroit repositioning of Labour. Page 9

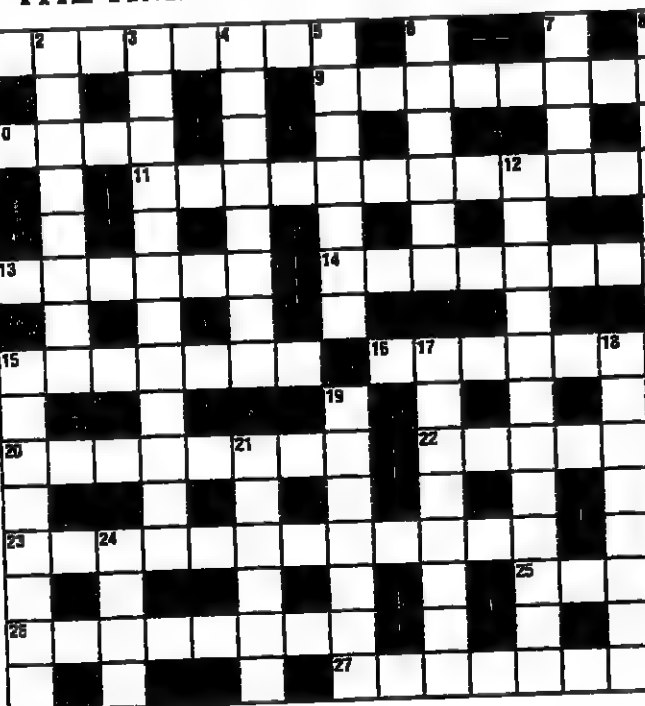
SIMON BARNES

The latest brainwave from the political front is a call to bring back the terracing at Premiership football clubs. Remember Hillsborough? We all do, alas, but not, it appears, Tom Pridy, Labour's Shadow Sports Minister. Page 46

Dennis Main Wilson, producer, changing, says Brenda Maddox, then dump *The Archers*. Page 32

Normant Lamont and Lord Beloff on Europe: rail privatisation; Nicola Horlock; Chief Rabbi and non-orthodox Jews. Page 17

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,383



- ACROSS**
- Portents in the papers, including the Times (8).
 - Hype up love poetry, lines briefly written (8).
 - Girl making a dozen old-fashioned pies (4).
 - Stop arguing, having settled scores with senate (4,4).
 - Old woman unfortunately rebuffed salutation (6).
 - Back China getting new weapons (5).
 - American detectives providing record for collection by fellows (7).
 - Second-class in vessel will do for this highlander (7).
 - Sound engineers legally bound (8).
 - Sketch again showing crimson and green (6).
 - Acts as mosh at night turns up (5,2,3).
- DOWN**
- It sounds like I possess a small island (4).
 - Item of furniture that is superior gets poked about at first (4-4).
 - Contrived some plan to come to terms with redundancy (8).
 - To restore American city, tax entertainment initially (8).
 - Shirt appears to be crumpled - it should sparkle (4,8).
 - Apparently energetic type without bulk shown up as flimsy (8).
 - Thus little woman may go on vessel for short holiday (7).
 - City info on thoroughfare being taken up (6).
 - Star participating in festive gathering (4).
 - Irritating substance makes everyone on work unit stop short (5).
 - Praise NT idea for new development within public space (12).
 - Man interrupts religious leader reading from the Bible (8).
 - Water from one river flowing both ways over barrier (8).
 - Without others around sailors collect shells (8).
 - Fortunately drink flows copiously (5,2).
 - Intervene and save money (4,2).
 - One is taken in by deranged girl (4).

CLASH SPELLING
O T A T N A M I
R E S T A I N T O P I C
U E D R A E O E
S C A R G E M E A S U R E D
C O P A T Y
A F T E R I A S T E H E R B
T R E R I S R A
E L A N A D V E R T I S E R
V I O S A
P L E D G I N G A L P A C A
E R N A P W P I
T A S S O B A N D A C H I N
A E R L O G I E
L O G G E M E N T T U D O R

Solution to Puzzle No 20,382

CLASH SPELLING
O T A T N A M I
R E S T A I N T O P I C
U E D R A E O E
S C A R G E M E A S U R E D
C O P A T Y
A F T E R I A S T E H E R B
T R E R I S R A
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HIGHEST & LOWEST
Yesterday's highest and lowest temperatures in the UK
Yesterday's highest and lowest temperatures in the UK
Yesterday's highest and lowest temperatures in the UK

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the new material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

HEALTH SAFETY NET
We want to know what other important health issues you think we should cover. Write to us at the Health Safety Net, c/o The Times, 1, The Quadrant, London WC2N 2JF. We will be happy to discuss your ideas with you. All details on the Internet: <http://www.wpahealth.com>

WPAO
Western Provident Association
<http://www.wpahealth.com>

FORECAST

General: a ridge of high pressure over Scotland will decline, while a frontal system moves slowly across the South. England and Wales will be dull and misty with rain or drizzle at times. Most of the rain should be light and patchy but heavier bursts are likely at times. It will be mild in the South, but rather cold in the North.

Scotland and Northern Ireland: should be mainly dry with bright or sunny spells, but overnight fog patches may be slow to clear in places. Northwest Scotland will be cloudy with rain at times. Temperatures generally will be a little below normal.

London, SE England, Central S England, Channel Isles, SW England: cloudy and misty. Rain or drizzle at times. Wind south or southeast, light to moderate. Mild, max 9C (48F).

E Anglia, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, S Wales: cloudy and misty. Rain or drizzle at times. Wind south or southeast, light to moderate. Mild, max 9C (48F).

Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N England, NE England: rain or drizzle spreading from south, falling as sleet or snow on mountains. Wind mainly southerly at first, becoming light and variable. Max 4C (38F).

Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, Angli, Northern Ireland: mainly dry with bright or sunny intervals but mist or fog patches may persist in places. Wind light and variable, mainly southerly. Rather cool, max 4C (38F).

NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: cloudy, rain at times. Becoming mainly dry later. Wind south or southwest, moderate to fresh. Max 7C (45F).

Outlook: rain in east dying out, rain later in west. Temperatures near normal.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b = bright; c = cloudy; d = drizzle; ds = dust or ash; du = dust; f = fog; g = gale; h = heavy rain; l = light rain; o = shower; r = rain; s = snow; w = mist; w = thunder									
	Sun	Fair	C	M	F	Sun	Rain	F	C
Andorra	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	5.8	0.0	6	45
Arad	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	4.8	7.0	6	45
Azores	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.0	7.0	6	45
Bahia	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.0	7.0	6	45
Birmingham	1.2	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	3	37
Bogota	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	4.6	7.0	6	45
Bombay	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.0	7.0	6	45
Buenos	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4	39
Cardiff	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	4	39
Canton	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	5.2	0.0	4	39
Chongqing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6	43
Chongqing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4	39
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Chongqing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4	39
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Chongqing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4	39

THE TIMES

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 22 1997

Pension chiefs face PIA grilling

By MARIANNE CORRIE
INSURANCE
CORRESPONDENT

INSURANCE companies suspected of dragging their feet over the pensions mis-selling review are being summoned to a series of secret meetings by the Personal Investment Authority (PIA).

The PIA's chief executive, Colette Rowe, has decided to get tough with companies she believes to be the worst offenders and has warned them they must resolve most of their cases by the end of this year.

Among those on the list of interviewees are executives from Prudential, Pearl, Legal & General, TSB, and Co-operative Insurance, firms with the biggest backlog of cases.

However, some industry sources have predicted that many cases will still be outstanding "by the end of the century". The review was launched in 1994.

The meetings began last week and Ms Rowe and the PIA's chairman, Joe Palmer, met executives to discuss ways of clearing the bulk of outstanding cases by December.

They discussed how the review was progressing and what resources were being used to resolve the cases. Ms Rowe is believed to have told firms that if necessary they must double the number of staff assigned to the review.

Some have 45 employees involved in researching claims for reinstatement into occupational schemes.

The PIA yesterday declined to comment. Pension companies were supposed to have completed reviews of all top priority cases by December 31 last year.

According to PIA figures, only 7,000 out of 58,000 priority cases and an estimated 1.5 million victims nationwide have received compensation.

In November the Securities and Investment Board announced a formula designed to enable compensation to be paid more quickly and reduced the questions an occupational scheme must answer from 200 to eight.

Insurance companies are waiting for clarification from the PIA on the shortened questionnaire. The PIA response is expected within a month.

On Monday it emerged that the Prudential had agreed to compensate some of the victims of pensions mis-selling at an estimated cost of £800,000, after reaching an agreement with the GMB union.



Ian Gibson on the Micra production line at Washington, Tyne & Wear, yesterday. His tough negotiating convinced the Japanese to invest in Britain

Nissan UK wins battle for jobs

By OLIVER AUGUST

NISSAN'S UK managers have won a £215 million battle with their bosses in Japan and secured the creation of thousands of jobs in Britain.

An extra 800 workers will be employed at an existing plant in Sunderland to build a new Nissan model, a mid-sized family car. A further 2,700 jobs will be created at Nissan's supplier base in the area.

The new model has been planned for the last three years and will enter production in 2000. Nissan's head office originally wanted to build it in Japan.

But Ian Gibson, the UK chief executive, convinced Nissan, in "tough" negotiations, that Britain was the production place that would best serve Nissan's global aims. Eighty per cent of the Sunderland output is for export, mostly to Europe but also to Australia.

Within Europe, Britain was the most price-competitive production place, he said. His words were echoed by Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade. He said: "This latest decision by Nissan marks a significant development in their presence in Europe and underlines the attractions of the UK as a place to manufacture."

Mr Gibson praised the productivity and efficiency of the present 4,000 Sunderland workers, who built 231,000 cars last year, as among the highest in the world.

New workers will be recruited in mid-1999 and will receive up to six months' training. Nissan received no Government aid to help bring the new car to the UK.

The new Nissan will be in direct competition with the Ford Escort, the production of which is to be switched to Germany and Spain with a loss of 1,300 UK jobs.

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CBI backs Clarke over base rates — for now

By PHILIP BASSETT
AND JANET BUSH

The Confederation of British Industry said yesterday that the strong pound is hitting industry and exports, and that an interest rate rise is not justified for now.

The Treasury seized on the CBI's quarterly industrial trends survey to justify the Chancellor's decision, in the face of Bank of England advice, to leave base rates on hold.

Michael Jack, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said it was clear sterling's recent strength had helped to keep industry cost pressures very subdued.

His comments suggest that the Chancellor is unrepentant about last week's decision and continues to argue that the pound's strength is a powerful deflationary force. This directly contradicts the view expressed on Monday night by Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, that sterling did not directly affect the build-up of domestic demand and that rates should be raised in any case.

Ross Buckland, chief executive of Unigate and a member of the CBI's economic affairs committee, said that sterling's strength was beginning to feed through to manufacturers' ex-

port orders. "We say, looking at all the elements, that no interest rate increase is justified at the present time — but I stress at the present time."

CBI leaders accepted that the signals from its survey remained "mixed", and did not resolve entirely the awkward choices facing the Government and Bank over monetary policy.

CBI analysts said: "With the output recovery expected to continue and manufacturers' cost and price pressures encouragingly weak, the decision about raising interest rates is on a knife edge."

The latest survey of more

than 1,000 manufacturers, accounting for around half the sector's exports and jobs, showed that export demand had levelled off for the first time for more than three years, largely because of sterling's appreciation.

At the time of the latest survey, sterling was more than 9 per cent higher than at the previous survey last October. "Companies are becoming concerned about the export outlook, and this is reflected in the fall in optimism about export prospects and the rise in the proportion of companies reporting that prices are a constraint on their

ability to win export orders," the survey said.

Of less positive reading for the Chancellor were figures suggesting a sharp pick-up in price expectations, although City analysts noted that this probably relates to the fact that many manufacturers revise their list prices at the beginning of each year.

A balance of 67 per cent of companies said that prices are now the factor most likely to limit export orders over the next four months. This figure — sharply up from 55 per cent three months ago — was last equalled in October 1989.

Separate figures provided yesterday also provided some support for the Chancellor's stance on rates. They show tentative signs that demand for credit in the economy may have started to tail off. The latest figures from building societies showed that, while 1996 as a whole was a robust year for mortgage lending and confirmed that the recovery in the housing market was stronger than expected, mortgage demand appears to have weakened in December.

In addition, lending by British banks to the corporate sector was markedly weaker, and there was a surprising drop in the annual growth rate of M4 broad money supply. M4 fell 0.2 per cent in December, depressing its annual rate to 9.6 per cent, from 10.8 per cent previously.

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Deutsche endorses Horlick ban

By ROBERT MILLER, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE heir apparent at Deutsche Bank, the owner of Morgan Grenfell, yesterday gave unequivocal backing to its subsidiary over the high-profile departure of Nicola Horlick.

Rolf Breuer, a main board director of Deutsche who will succeed Hilmar Kopper as head of the bank in May, said: "The facts are clear. Mrs Horlick inflicted damage on the bank with her attempt to poach staff and then resigned." The Frankfurt-based director also sits on the board of Morgan Grenfell.

Mrs Horlick, who was sus-

pended from her job as head of Morgan Grenfell's £18 billion UK pensions business, last week, has denied that she resigned her post.

She said that she would fight for reinstatement or pursue a case for "constructive dismissal" and compensation.

Morgan Grenfell insists that she has resigned and in doing so has given up her right to a 1996 bonus worth up to £500,000 and up to a further £2 million held in a deferred phantom option scheme available to senior directors.

A spokesman said: "Any-

one who has left the bank before bonuses are finalised, for whatever reason, forfeits their right to that bonus payment. That is standard City practice."

After a meeting with her lawyers yesterday, Mrs Horlick said: "The chances of reinstatement seem slim."

Morgan Grenfell is expected tomorrow to conclude its internal investigation into the alleged attempt by Mrs Horlick to poach staff and take them with her to join ABN Amro, the Dutch bank.

As part of its inquiry, conducted by the personnel department, eight senior figures

and former colleagues of Mrs Horlick at Morgan Grenfell have made statements to Fox Williams, the law firm acting for the fund management house.

Top City managers frequently receive approaches or put out feelers themselves.

Some four or five years ago it is understood that Mrs Horlick broke off a family holiday in Ireland to meet Stephen Zimmerman, deputy chairman of Mercury Asset Management, her previous employer, who was on holiday in the south of France.

Bids now arriving at St Pancras Chambers

By CARL MORTIMER

PROPERTY developers and hoteliers are queuing up to bid for St Pancras Chambers, the vast neo-Gothic building fronting St Pancras station in London. Eight groups of developers, including Trevor Osborne, former head of Speyhawk, Sir Rocco Forte, the hotelier, and British Land are proposing to restore the old Victorian lady on the Euston Road to her former glory.

The bidders have been shortlisted by London & Continental Railways, the operator of Eurostar, which is seeking a new role for the Grade I listed building to coincide with the opening of the Channel Tunnel rail link in 2003.

Built as the Midland Grand Hotel between 1868 and 1873, the building was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and



Forte in the queue

was also the result of a competition by a railway company seeking a prestigious terminal hotel. The hotel closed in 1935 and the grand staircase and decorative ceilings made a glamorous home for British Rail offices until the 1960s when it failed to secure a fire certificate.

The proposals submitted include a mix of hotel, retail catering and housing uses. Stephen Jordan, managing director of the LCR property division, said the company will be spending hundreds of millions on the Eurostar concourse and wanted a glamorous development to front the station. Mr Jordan said the 600-room hotel needed new infrastructure. "In the old days, a chambermaid brought you a ewer of hot water. Today people expect hot running water."

Sir Rocco and Mr Osborne are joining forces in the Midland Hotel Group. Other bidders include Bouygues, the French construction company; Lynton; and a consortium including Sir Robert McAlpine and Whitbread.

LCR intends to retain a long-term interest in the redeveloped St Pancras Chambers.

Abbey's early move in fight for new savers

ABBEY NATIONAL has thrown the first punch in the battle for the estimated £20 billion to be released in the economy this year from the flotation of building societies and life insurance companies (Caroline Mervell writes).

The bank has lifted savings rates by up to 0.75 per cent to two millions of savers looking forward to payouts averaging £1,100 as the Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, Woolwich, Bristol & West, Northern Rock and Norwich Union convert.

The biggest increases are bestowed on savers with a lot to invest and who keep it with the society for a long time.

The Abbey saw big savings outflows immediately after it took over the National & Provincial last year. Around £600 million was moved out as former N & P members moved their savings to societies offering higher interest.

Millwall set for administration

By JASON NISSE

MILLWALL will be placed in administration today, becoming the first quoted football club to collapse.

David Buchler, an accountant who is also chairman of Barnet Football Club, is to become the administrator of Millwall, which was relegated to the Nationwide Second Division in the summer and has £10 million of debts and is losing £3 million a year.

Mr Buchler aims to cut costs, which will include pruning the 44-strong playing staff, and come to a deal with creditors, led by NatWest Bank.

That will allow Millwall to come out of administration before the end of the season. Meanwhile, the club will continue playing in the league.

Townsend & Co, Millwall's financial adviser, has said it is willing to back a rescue share

issue, raising £6 million. Millwall shares were suspended at 4p yesterday. It was only the second club to be floated, joining the Unlisted Securities Market in 1989. It has had a full listing since 1994. At its peak the club was valued at £60 million.

A consortium led by Nigel Wray, which is planning to inject up to £15 million into Nottingham Forest, has told the directors that it is unhappy about the date set for a shareholders' meeting to approve the deal.

Forest is planning to hold the meeting on February 24, but the Wray document clearly states the offer will lapse on February 13.

The Wray team can extend the offer, but it is threatening to pull out unless Forest brings the date forward.

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Peps and pensions boost GA

Sales of personal equity plans and unit trusts proved a huge boost to General Accident's new business growth for 1996. They added a further £336 million to single premium business during the year, compared with £3.3 million in 1995, bringing total premium income to £1.1 billion. New annualised premium income rose 40 per cent to £184.4 million.

Pensions business also grew strongly, with new annualised premium income at £86.9 million, compared with £29.9 million the previous year. Total premium income for pensions was £453.4 million compared with £220.3 million in 1995.

Friends Provident announced that its total new business last year more than doubled from £579 million to £1.2 billion. New life, pensions and unit trust single premiums were up 68 per cent from £371 million to £625 million. New life, pensions and unit trust annual premiums were up 3.5 per cent from £85 million to £88 million.

BCI to buy

Blue Circle Industries, the cement and consumer products company, is negotiating the purchase of St Marys Cement Corporation (SMCC), a private Canadian company, for an undisclosed sum.

SMCC has a strong position in the Ontario market, including aggregates and concrete businesses, and a distribution network around the Great Lakes.

Board moves

Compass Group, the contract catering company, is promoting Roger Matthews, 42, from group finance director to group managing director, while Andrew Lynch, 40, will replace Mr Matthews as group finance director.

Daejan same

Daejan Holdings, the property company, is holding the interim dividend at 10p a share after reporting pre-tax profits little changed at £10.9 million (£10.4 million) for the six months to September 30.

Guarded welcome by business for proposals on competition

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BUSINESS leaders have cautiously welcomed proposals from key industrialists to improve Britain's competitiveness. Their response to the recommendations from the Commission on Public Policy and British business contrasted sharply with attacks on business figures on the commission by Michael Heseltine, Deputy Prime Minister.

Britain's main business bodies gave careful consideration to the commission's report, *Promoting Prosperity*. While they did not necessarily agree with all its analysis or recommendations, their examination of it was in line with the view of Sir Ronnie Hampel, chairman of ICI and head of the Stock Exchange's inquiry into corporate governance, who said it was "a stimulating report worthy of wide debate".

Adair Turner, Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry, said the report was valuable and comprehensive although he emphasised that the CBI did not agree with all of its detailed recommendations. He said the study illustrated the high degree of consensus increasingly emerging as to the levers of national economic improvement. What was impressive about the report, he said, was that it provided a definition of the philosophy of that consensus.

Business leaders were uneasy about the commission's recommendations for a minimum wage and ending Britain's opt-out from the social chapter. They were also divided about its proposal to join a single European currency.

Tim Melville-Ross, Director-General of the Institute of Directors, welcomed the com-

mission's efforts in addressing the issue of competitiveness although he made it clear that he disagreed with much of what it proposed. He rejected the commission's emphasis on the pervasiveness of short-termism in the corporate culture, but said there was something to be said for its proposal for clarifying directors' duties in law.

Sir Michael Perry, chairman of Unilever, emphasised his own disagreements with some policy conclusions, but said the commission was right to underline the importance of wealth generation. George Simpson, managing director of GEC and a commission member, said: "I firmly believe that we have to get the relationship between business and government right - whoever is in office."

Alec Reed, chairman of Reed, the personnel company, said at the launch conference that as a businessman he had been a Conservative voter for 15 years, but at the coming election would be supporting Labour.

In the future there will be no dramatic increase in traffic from hub to hub, it said. Instead, more passengers will want to go from their nearest airport directly to their final destination.

Smaller aircraft with the range of a superjumbo will allow airlines to establish less frequented routes such as Manchester to Singapore and Birmingham to Atlanta.

After three years of research, Boeing said it would have had to spend \$7 billion to develop the superjumbo. As airlines, including British Airways, had failed to sign launch orders for the 747-X, the risk was deemed to be too great. Most of the 1,000 people working on the stretch programme will be switched to new 767 and 777 models.

Airbus, however, insisted it will press ahead with plans to build a superjumbo, dubbed the A3-XC, by 2003. It will be capable of carrying up to 800 people and Airbus estimates the cost at \$7 billion. Analysts have expressed doubt that Airbus would be able to raise the funding necessary and they put the cost at closer to \$15 billion.

British Aerospace is investing £25 million at its Brough factory near Chester, where it manufactures wings for Airbus. The investment will create 100 jobs and safeguard a further 60. It is likely a further £20 million will be invested later.

Boeing, the world's leading aviation group, has halted plans for a new 550-seat aircraft.

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Britannia suspends savings account

THE Britannia Building Society yesterday closed its most popular instant access account to new investors but denied the move was a prelude to a takeover or a decision to abandon its mutual status. The society, the sixth largest, said that account openings had been running at 10 times the normal rate, after speculation over its future. The Britannia has been seen as a likely candidate for a merger, with societies such as the Bradford & Bingley tipped as possible partners.

John Heaps, chief executive of the Britannia, said that the society had no intention of following the Halifax and Woolwich building societies to the stock market. He said: "We have said repeatedly, and I say again, Britannia will not convert and there is no windfall in prospect." The suspension of the Flexible Savings Account, which has an investing minimum of £500, comes a day after the Britannia revealed that it would be transferring its 100,000 current account holders to the Co-operative Bank.

Panther pact over Edit

PANTHER SECURITIES, the firm aiming to oust the board of the Exmoor Dual Investment Trust (Edit) at an extraordinary meeting on February 3, has promised shareholders that it will vote for final dividends to be paid. Panther blocked the payment at an agm last year but wants shareholders to vote against the board's proposals to liquidate the fund. In a letter to shareholders Panther says Edit's record has been abysmal, achieving only a 3.3 per cent growth in net asset value in seven years.

600 Group shares fall

SHARES of 600 Group fell 55p to 143p yesterday after the engineering group gave warning that full-year profits would fall short of City expectations. The company blamed weak demand for machine tools in the UK in the summer, which had continued into the final quarter. The effect was compounded by the high level of stocks built up in anticipation of the normal rise in activity in the second half of the year. The company said that although excess stocks have been reduced, demand was unlikely to recover until next year.

First reading for Bill

A BILL designed to ensure sick and disabled savers receive windfall payments from building societies is to get its first reading today. Douglas French, Conservative MP for Gloucester, wants to give statutory protection to those who have accounts held in trust, including the sick, the disabled, children and charities. Many such savers are at present being excluded from flotation or conversion windfalls. The legislation would not be retrospective, so the Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Halifax flotations would not be affected.

Internet banking service

ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND is to provide a full Internet banking service to its customers from the spring. The bank's online facilities will include access to statements from the previous six months, transfer of transaction details to personal finance software and electronic settlement of bills issued by 750 companies. Customers will also be able to view or change standing orders and direct debits and transfer money between Royal Bank accounts.

Austin Reed sales rise

AUSTIN REED, the clothing retailer, enjoyed a 10 per cent jump in sales in the run-up to Christmas and said that margins on its women's wear have recovered after a setback in the division last year. The company said that its Chester Barrie menswear label performed particularly strongly in the US, but the Austin Reed wholesale business in mainland Europe continued to trade at depressed levels. It was still seeing a lack of consumer confidence and spending in key markets. The shares rose 11p, to 212½p.

Barbour Index rises

BARBOUR INDEX, the supplier of specialist information services, has increased the interim dividend by 5 per cent to 3.15p a share. The rise comes after Barbour achieved a 21 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £1.9 million, from £1.57 million, in the half year to October 31, on turnover that rose to £7.25 million, from £6.59 million. Earnings were 7.5p a share, from 6.2p last time. Net cash was unchanged at £4 million. Katherine Tickle has been appointed the company's managing director.

Litten Tree pubs to grow

SURREY FREE INNS, the retail pub company, intends to open around ten new Litten Tree branded pubs a year. It is planning to open four further Litten Trees in the second half of the year, taking the total estate to 11. Tony Hill, managing director, said the company could fund the expansion plans from existing resources. In the half year to November 17 the company lifted pre-tax profits 72 per cent to £1.04 million. Overall turnover rose 19 per cent to £7 million. Earnings were 8.6p a share (6p). The interim dividend is 1.25p a share (1p).

DTI blocks French move on Mid Kent

MID KENT Holdings, the water company serving parts of Kent and East Sussex, was celebrating victory after a hostile approach by its two French-owned neighbours, Saur and General Utilities, was blocked by the Department of Trade and Industry (Christine Buckley writes).

Ian Lang, the President of

the Board of Trade, accepted the findings of an inquiry by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) into the proposed bid that found any merger would be against the public interest.

If successful, Mid Kent would have been divided between the two. Mr Lang said that the proposed bid had been stopped to maintain regulatory comparisons in the water industry.

He said that comparisons by the regulator between companies helped to put downward pressure on prices and encourage efficiencies.

The MMC had said that the regulator would lose such comparative methods with the takeover of Mid Kent by General Utilities, a division of Générale des Eaux and Saur. It also raised concerns that local competition would be lost.

The French companies said they were disappointed and that there was a compelling environmental and commercial rationale for their proposals.

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LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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LEGAL NOTICES

INVESTMENT ACT 1986
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
The Insolvency Act 1986 (the "Act") provides that a company which is unable to pay its debts as they fall due may be wound up by the court. The court has appointed a liquidator to administer the company's affairs.

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The Insolvency Act 1986 (the "Act") provides that a company which is unable to pay its debts as they fall due may be wound up by the court. The court has appointed a liquidator to administer the company's affairs.

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DAEJAN HOLDINGS P.L.C.

INTERIM STATEMENT		For the half year ended 30 September 1996	
	6 months to 30.9.96	6 months to 30.9.95	
Net Profit	£1,498	£1,179	
Surplus on Sale of Trading Properties	3,382	1,934	
Other Income	18	45	
	18,896	13,158	
Administration & Other Expenses	(2,488)	(2,119)	
Operating Profit from Continuing Operations	14,407	11,039	
Surplus on Sale of Investment Properties	608	518	
Net Interest Payable	(4,057)	(1,318)	
Profit on Ordinary Activities before Taxation	10,958	10,418	
Less: Taxation	(8,600)	(8,410)	
Minority Interests	(14)	(22)	
Profit attributable to shareholders	£2,344	£1,986	
Earnings Per Share	45.1p	42.9p	

An Interim Dividend of 15p per share (1995 - 18p) will be paid on 14 March 1997 to shareholders registered on 16 February 1997. This dividend will amount to £2,807,000 (1995 - £2,607,000).

The increase in net interest income arises from the major portfolio acquisition, completion of which took place in March. The surplus on sales of trading properties reflects the returning strength of the residential sales market. It is anticipated that this profit after taxation for the full year will be similar to that for the year to 31 March 1996.

The financial information included in this document does not constitute statutory accounts within the meaning of Section 240 of the Companies Act 1985. The statutory accounts for the year to 31 March 1996, on which the auditors have given an unqualified opinion, have been filed with the Registrar of Companies. The interim financial information is unaudited.

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Shares resume rise on Greenspan's softer line

SOOTHING words on the US economy from Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, injected investors with a new lease of life on both sides of the Atlantic last night. In his testimony to the Senate Budget Committee he painted a rosy picture of a vigorous US economy with few signs of inflation. It seemed to be in complete contrast to his comments of little over a month ago when he left world markets reeling after comments about their "irrational exuberance".

But his latest comments were just what investors wanted to hear. The Dow Jones industrial average climbed more than 50 points after his speech, while in London the FT-SE 100 index put in a late rally. It clawed back an initial 26-point fall to close 15 up at 4,955. Turnover reached a healthy 874 million shares.

Among leaders **Thorn** continued to hit new lows with a fall of 9½p at 199½p in the wake of Monday's profits warning. The group complained about the effect the strong pound was having on business and said that profits for the full year were unlikely to show much improvement on last year's £170 million. **Thorn** was demerged from EMI in August of last year at 400p. Brokers are now worried about a possible cut in the dividend if there is a further deterioration in business.

LucasVarity was the beneficiary of a small, mixed programme trade valued at around £40 million. It firmed 1½p to 220p as one institution decided the shares were a buy. **BOC Group** jumped 34½p to 920p in response to talk of a "buy" recommendation from SBC Warburg, the broker.

Heavy turnover was reported in **Coats Vytella** with almost seven million shares changing hands as the price retreated 2½p to 135½p. The price fell from a peak of 207p last year after a profits warning. But some brokers say the shares, which yield around 3 per cent, have been oversold.

There was further selective support for the banks after **Barclays** firmed 6p to £11.01p. **Lloyds TSB** 2½p at 459p, and **Royal Bank of Scotland** 7p at 578p.

Shares of **Millwall** were suspended at 4p pending clarification of the company's financial position. Before a halt was called to trading almost



David Simons, left, and Martin Gatto of Somerfield, whose shares fell 5½p despite meeting half-year profit forecasts

one million shares had changed hands amid whispers that a bid was on the way. Last night, as traders were calculating the cost of reacting to bad information, it emerged that details of a cash injection were being thrashed out. Word is that Peter Mead of Abbot Mead Vickers Lane wants to inject around £6 million into the south London football club.

Shares in the 600 Group plunged 5p to 144½p after it warned that profits for the current year were unlikely to match market expectations. It blamed a slump in demand for machine tools and excess stock levels. **ABN Amro Hoare Govett**, the broker, was among a number to respond by reducing its forecast by 13 million to £11 million. A total

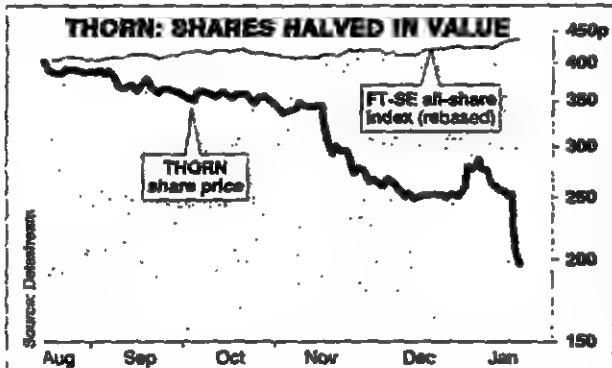
There are signs of a revival in the fortunes of **BSkyB**, the satellite broadcaster 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*. After tumbling from a peak of 666p last year the price rose 10p to 571½p yesterday as Kleinwort Benson, the broker, issued a target price of 700p a share.

via a heavily discounted rights issue at 1p a share. He may decide to take up a large part of the issue.

The news dragged the other quoted football clubs lower. **Manchester United** fell 4½p to 717½p. **Sunderland** 5½p to 752½p. **Tottenham Hotspur** 5p to 667½p. **Southampton** 5p to 146½p. **Sheff Wed** 5p to 102½p.

of 2.7 million shares were traded.

Somerfield failed to respond to a maiden set of half-year figures in line with brokers' forecasts with the price finishing 5½p lower at 168½p. The old Gateway supermarket chain, which joined the stock market last July and is headed by David Simons, chief executive, with Martin



Gatto, finance director, reported pre-tax profit of £54.6 million. That compares with a figure of £43 million. Brokers are continuing to express concern about the ability of the small supermarket chains to prevent their bigger rivals eroding market share.

Budgets slipped 1½p to 45½p after reporting interim figures on Monday. **J Sainsbury** slipped 4p to 387p ahead of a Friday's trading update. **Tesco**, which reported a 12 per cent rise in like-for-like sales on Monday, softened 2p to 367p.

William Cook firmed 5p to 380p after injecting the increased terms from **Triplex Lloyd**, down 1½p at 192½p. **Triplex Lloyd** has raised its mixture of cash and shares from 30p to 40p a share, valuing **William Cook** at £74.8 million, which **William Cook** said is still too low.

Life Sciences International responded to the £236 million bid from **Thermo Instrument Systems**, the US company, with a leap of 41½p to 134p. **LSI** has forecast pre-tax profits of £27 million, before restructuring costs of £27 million.

Jacques Vert, the loss-making women's fashionwear group, stood out with a jump of 21p at 53½p after announcing details of a proposed share-up. **Linwood's Home Shopping** is taking a near 20 per cent stake for £2.7 million. **GILT-EDGED**: The London bond market also responded positively to the bullish remarks from Alan Greenspan, with prices clawing back early sharp falls to finish mixed on the day.

The Bank of England issued details of next week's double auction consisting of £2.5 billion of Treasury 7½ per cent 2007 on Tuesday and £1.5 billion of Treasury 7 per cent 2002 on Thursday.

The March series of the long gilt closed a tick easier at £110½, after touching a low for the day of £110½. There were 71,000 contracts.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 slipped a tick to £103½, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 lost £1½ at £102½.

NEW YORK: Shares on Wall Street moved higher in early trading as bonds welcomed a generally upbeat testimony by Alan Greenspan, the Fed chairman. A rally in Boeing shares helped. The Dow Jones industrial average was 24.25 points higher by midday at 6,868.12.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 6868.12 (+24.25)
S&P Composite 779.91 (+3.21)
Tokyo
Nikkei Average 17586.16 (+122.18)
Hong Kong
Hang Seng 13731.79 (+135.69)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 672.32 (+1.31)
Sydney:
ASX 3630.13 (+13.9)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2976.71 (+53.97)
Singapore:
Straits 2260.79 (+21.09)

Brussels:
General 11194.15 (+10.53)
Paris:
CAC 3500.85 (+7.78)
Zurich:
SIX Gen 876.90 (+9.88)

London:
FT 30 2827.2 (+10.2)
FT 100 4965.5 (+1.3)
FTSE 100 4955.5 (+1.3)
FTSE 250 4570.1 (+0.1)
FTSE 350 2801.1 (+0.4)
FTSE Europe 100 2017.21 (+17.83)
FT All-Share 2055.17 (+0.64)
FT 1000 2111.17 (+1.23)
FT 1000 Index 117.45 (+0.41)
FT 1000 Index 117.45 (+0.41)
FT 1000 Index 117.45 (+0.41)

RECENT ISSUES
Aquarius 174½
BZW Endowment Red 56½
Cadentree 267½
Enterprise Vent Cap 89½
Epione Network 33½
G8 Railways 262½
Hardy Underwear 170
Necell 49½
Oxford Biomedica 57½
Parkwood Holdings 74½
Plex Technologies 99½
Sheffield United 752½
Sunderland 132½
Sutton Harbour 132
Wm Broom Albion 225½

RIGHTS ISSUES
Ashbury n/p (33) 2
Comptel n/p (160) 3½
Pressac n/p (180) 5½
Prism Rail n/p (330) 22½
Shakespeare n/p (137) 24½
Wicks n/p (150) 11½

MAJOR CHANGES
RISER:
Jacques Vert 53½p (+21p)
Allied Text 166p (+13½p)
Clyde Biotech 220p (+17½p)
Austin Reed 211½p (+10½p)
Christies Int 281½p (+12p)
Athead 240p (+8½p)
Barrett Dore 276p (+8½p)
RMC Gp 340p (+14p)
Molins 347½p (+10p)
Bollinger 580p (+5½p)
Bollinger 580p (+5½p)
Bollinger 580p (+5½p)

FALLS:
St. Helens 144½p (-55p)
Salco 67½p (-10p)
Bent Chemical 98p (-4½p)
Bluebird Toys 165p (-4½p)
London & Man 415½p (-17p)
Patriotic Com 331½p (-11½p)
Gen Services 321½p (-8½p)
Allied Irish 307½p (-11½p)
Legal & Gen 387½p (-8½p)
Scotia 720p (-15p)
Celltech 820p (-12½p)

Closing Prices Page 51

TEMPERS

Cyclical stocks turned over

RISK is in the eye of the beholder but some businesses, branded as cyclical, never escape punishment when things go wrong. The 600 Group machine toolmaker suffered yesterday when it warned the market about destocking by dealers who sell the company's computer-controlled lathes. Worries that the machine tool cycle had already run its course knocked more than 25 per cent off the shares. The shares are valued at only 9 times forecast earnings and 7 times 1996 earnings.

On such a rating one might assume that machine tools were heading for deep recession, or that 600 Group was heading for serious trouble. Yet there is no evidence to support either proposition. With expectations of profits of £11 million, the company is hardly a basket case. 600 Group did report a softer market in the UK last summer, but the main

culprit for the sales downturn was a rush by dealers to build up supplies last year of its Tornado CNC lathe, which was enjoying huge popularity. Demand pushed order times out to six months, causing dealers to build up stocks. These are unwinding, but 600 Group can now deliver in less than four weeks.

A climate of steady growth and low inflation is ideal for machine toolmakers; by rights the sector should be prospering rather than heading for collapse. Unfortunately, old prejudices die hard. Fashionable service businesses, such as recruitment, are even more volatile than engineers, being prone to collapsing sales during recession. Yet such companies now enjoy share ratings of 20 times earnings. Poor old 600 Group must live and die an engineer, but the shares do look cheap.

Somerfield

EVERY dog has its day and so it is with new flotations. Those investors who bought shares in **Somerfield** last August at its deeply discounted 145p flotation price will have made a tidy profit of up to 20 per cent on Monday, after they sold their shares at 174p, when the stock reached a record high.

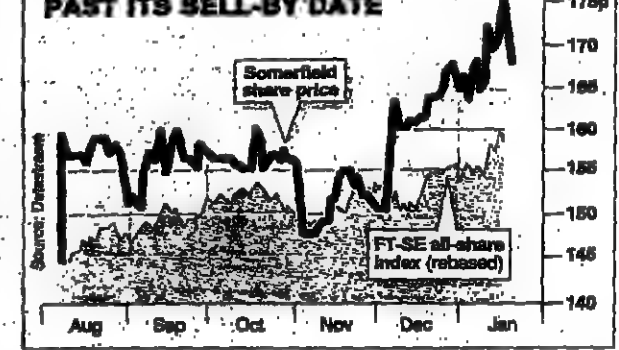
Now for the bad news that could turn out to be as good as it is going to get. Nothing in yesterday's maiden interim results suggests a reason for the share price to reach a similar level in the foreseeable future.

The biggest worry about **Somerfield** is sales growth. Yesterday's figures made painfully clear that the vast bulk of its spectacular like-for-like sales increase comes from those converted

from the old Gateway fascia into **Somerfield** in the past two years. Sales are falling at the rumour of old Gateways and the discount format. Food, **Glaxo**, **Meatwhale**, those **Somerfield** stores that were converted at an earlier stage are also seeing poor growth rates.

Somerfield's managers admit they cannot continue

to push margins higher; what they need is growth in the top line. If it cannot achieve growth in sales, **Somerfield** will become the prey of powerful competitors. Supporters point out that **Somerfield** shares are cheaper than **Kwik Save**, but that is hardly a reason to buy them. Take profits while you can.



Life Sciences

SIR Christopher Bland, former boss of **LWT**, once described **Life Sciences International** as his baby. Television may be more glamorous and made him much more money, but **Sir Christopher** and his team assembled the laboratory equipment group: more or less from scratch.

For the first five years, **Life Sciences** gave its shareholders a terrific run: for their money. Sadly, the second five years has been almost all downhill as the company wrestled with a string of problems: the squeeze on headline budgets, a poor acquisition and an expensive legal dispute among them. Yet **Life Sciences** remained strongly profitable.

Yesterday's offer from **Thermo Instrument Systems** looks a reasonable deal for both sides. **Life Sciences**' shares have looked substantially undervalued for some time. Management recognise

that recovering lost ground under their own steam could be a long and uncertain journey. At the same time, the phone has not exactly been ringing with competing offers.

Perhaps the news will flush out another bidder. The directors have not given binding acceptances for their own shares, so there is still some hope of a better deal.

Triplex/Cook

TRIPLEX LLOYD has brought out a sledgehammer in its battle for **William Cook**. With its final bid, worth 389p, it has accepted that its financial-basher does indeed have more life in it than the City expected.

Increasing the offer by some 30 per cent should still not break the bank at **Triplex**. It plans to take **Cook's** products abroad, and says it has already received interest from its largest clients in buying a broader range of products from an enlarged group.

Other benefits, it says, should be £2.5 million.

If true, the acquisition should wash its face within the first year, even if the seven institutions that control **William Cook** opt for **Triplex's** cash alternative. If **William Cook** does indeed produce the 37.2p earnings it has now forecast for 1997, **Triplex's** higher bid values the company on a lower multiple than its last offer.

Three months ago, nobody would have considered paying anywhere near 400p for **Cook's** shares were languishing at 240p and its management were doubtful about its prospects. Since the takeover bid started, **Cook** has claimed that the shares were always more under the mattress than previously revealed. Few companies are so shy of boasting about their achievements. Either **Cook** is going to regret cracking this particular nut.

EDITED BY CARL MORTSHED

COMMODITIES

LIFE

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Cocoa	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740
Robusta Coffee	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495
White Sugar	207	207	207	207	207	207	207	207	207	207	207	207	207

COMMODITIES

ICE/CLOR (London 4.00pm)

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Crude Oil	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75
Crude Oil	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75

COMMODITIES

GNL LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Wheat	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Barley	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180

COMMODITIES

FT-SE 100

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
FT-SE 100	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955

COMMODITIES

FT-SE 250

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
FT-SE 250	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570	4570

COMMODITIES

FT-SE 350

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
FT-SE 350	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801	2801

COMMODITIES

FT-SE Europe

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
FT-SE Europe	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017	2017

COMMODITIES

FT-SE All-Share

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
FT-SE All-Share	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055	2055

COMMODITIES

LIFE OPTIONS

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Cocoa	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740	2740
Robusta Coffee	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495	1495

COMMODITIES

ICE/CLOR (London 4.00pm)

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Crude Oil	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75
Crude Oil	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75

COMMODITIES

GNL LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Wheat	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Barley	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180

COMMODITIES

FT-SE 100

Contract	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
FT-SE 100	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955	4955

COMMODITIES

	1 month	3 month	12 month
FT-SE 250	4570	4570	4570
FT-SE 100	4570	4570	4570
FT-SE 250	4570	4570	4570
FT-SE 100	4570	4570	4570
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FT-SE 100	4570	4570	4570
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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Lowe Bell holds back

ANTHONY CARDEW was not the only public relations officer on Nicola Horlick's hastily drawn-up list. It appears that La Horlick's roller-coaster ride took off. Word has it that Lowe Bell would have said "no" to supervising the request. Now they would not want to upset Morgan Grenfell, would they?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Greg Hutchings. The chairman of Tomkins is 50 today, but he won't be marking it with a party. "Nobody knows I'm 50, and I try to pretend birthdays don't happen," he whispers. Instead, he will go for an early morning run.

Party wine

SIR James Goldsmith is minding drinks with politics. Although perhaps better used to champagne, his Referendum Party is launching its own wine. It's English, of course, from the Rowden vineyard in Kent, and the Ridgewood winery in East Sussex. Called Sovereignty, it will sell at £4.50 a bottle. But will it be used to toast Sir James's success at the general election, or to drown his sorrows?



Goldsmith: toast

Last parade?

WORD had it that Procter & Gamble is breaking its ties with the gaudy world of children's beauty pageants. For the past 30 years, the multinational has sponsored the Miss USA, Miss Teen USA, and Miss Universe pageants. As the contract runs out this year, a spokeswoman says that it is unlikely that P&G will renew. The official line is that its products are not getting the coverage P&G is looking for. Or could the Boring Day murder of a child beauty queen in Boulder, Colorado, have been a factor?

Rankin bows out

AFTER 37 years at Scottish & Newcastle, starting out as a warehouseman and ending as chairman, Sir Alick Rankin is bowing out next week. Aged 62, the Old Eborian is retiring to Glenalmond, Perthshire, where he will be anything but reclusive; he remains chairman of Christian Salvage, deputy chairman of General Accident, and a non-executive director of the Bank of Scotland. Never short of humour, Sir Alick recalls when he was subjected to psychometric testing. "Two professors walked into my office and quizzed me for half an hour. Two weeks later they came back to debrief me. They looked a bit shifty and, wondering if something was wrong, I asked them to come out with it. Then they burst out: 'Broadly, we don't know how you got the job and how you've kept it.'"

MEMBERS of The London Capital Club have rechristened the club's popular Tequila Slammer. Now known as a "Horlick's", the knock-out drink is said to be a big hit among members from Morgan Grenfell.

MORAG PRESTON



Gerry Robinson and Granada are believed to have paid Citigate £1 million for its work on the Forte bid out of an estimated £120 million in fees

No soft soap in the attempts to clean up PR in the City

Jon Ashworth says the Takeover Panel is prepared to take stern action over unauthorised leaks

City spin-doctors have much in common with bars of soap. They are manageable enough when you first open the packet, but just try to get a grip on them when wet. They slip and slide around the tub, leaving an oily film on the dirty bathwater. And on the slimy mess when the water has drained away.

It is in the murky world of takeover bids that the role of the financial public relations executive comes into its own. The same names crop up time and again, calling in favours and massaging announcements in the drive to keep the client ahead of the game. Success fees potentially running into millions of pounds are at stake.

But for how long? Pension funds are said to be growing increasingly unhappy about the level of fees paid to advisers in general. Banks, lawyers and others earned more than £1 billion in fees for their work in advising on takeovers and mergers in the UK last year. City PR firms might rank low in the pecking order, but still stand to pick up the odd million. The potential spoils are huge — but so are the penalties for those who cross the line.

Nowhere was the process

demonstrated more clearly than in the case of Granada's £3.3 billion punt for Forte. Sir Rocco Forte was in Yorkshire when the bid flashed up on the City screens on November 22 1995, and never fully recovered his poise. Granada's PR team, led by Jonathan Clare of Citigate, became locked in a mighty tussle with Brunswick, led by Alan Parker. The outcome was perhaps inevitable, but the Brunswick corner put up a good fight.

The bid for Forte cost Granada an estimated £120 million in fees; the bulk of it on underwriting. Granada's advisers, ABN Amro and Barclays de Zoete Wedd, received £11 million each. Citigate pocketed about £1 million for its work, although no figure was disclosed. Either way, Mr Clare and his team got their celebratory dinner at the Berkeley.

This side, City PRs have much to concern them. Soon after the completion of the Granada bid, Sir David Calcutt, chairman of the Takeover Panel, wrote to senior figures in the PR industry,

cautioning them about the improper leaking of price-sensitive information before and during takeover bids. Sir David noted the Panel's "increasing level of concern" about the number of unauthorised leaks, and gave warning of stern action if the practice continued.

Financial Dynamics, one of the bigger City players, had been embroiled in a row over the alleged leaking of price-sensitive information ahead of financial results from Caradon, the building products group. Some in the industry came out in support of tighter regulation of City PRs. Those supporting a system of licensing for practitioners included Anthony Cardew, currently acting for Nicola Horlick in her dispute with Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

The role of the City PR in takeover bids will always be controversial, but the industry insists it has cleaned up its act. Some of the dodgier practices seen in the Eighties — private eyes tailing clients, investiga-

tors sifting through dustbins — are long gone, they insist. Regulatory bodies such as the Securities and Investments Board (SIB) and Takeover Panel have seen to that. But the industry remains as shrouded in suspicion as ever. Can you really trust that PR adviser when they feed you that "hot" tip about the other camp? Why is it that certain Sunday newspapers appear to be on the inside track?

Scions of the PR industry close ranks on this one. Lord Chadlington, aka Peter Gummer, the chairman of Shandwick, said that firms previously brought in on special projects are now increasingly working with company boards at every stage. Piers Pottinger, group managing director of Lowe Bell Communications, said advisers were under much closer scrutiny from regulatory authorities. Mr Pottinger, whose assignments included Hoylake's bid for BAT Industries, and Minorco's punt for Consolidated Goldfields, said it was important to assess a client's case dispassionately to

see whether it would stand up to scrutiny. He said: "It's got to be more than 'Yal Booh! Sucks to you.' We're talking about value."

Brian Basham, scourge of ICI and others, says City PR has moved into a new league. Mr Basham, who acted for Hanson in the tussle with ICI, and represented the late Sir James Gulliver during the Guinness saga, said: "Anybody now who indulges in the Friday night drop is putting their client's interests in jeopardy. The SIB is waiting to pounce. You've just got to be quicker and more creative, while staying within the rules."

Media handling is just part of it. The PR team will work with bankers and lawyers to agree the main issues, and try to ensure that a company's line stands up to scrutiny. They are often heavily involved with investor relations, and in matters of documentation. There are also political and regulatory issues to consider.

That "huge" success fee may not be such a big deal after all. Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, said projecting the right image early on in a bid was worth its weight in gold — as shown by Granada's wrong-footing of Forte. Once the bid machine begins to roll, fees to advisers become an almost secondary concern.

Mr Healey says PR advisers will ultimately fall prey to the next downturn in the economic cycle. The frantic activity seen in the Eighties dried up in the recession, and will do so again. Mr Healey said: "Enjoy it while it lasts. The mergers and acquisitions market probably has no more than one or two years left to run."



ANTHONY HARRIS

Greed is not a joke, even when it rebounds

When the greedy over-reach themselves, we all get a good laugh. The billionaire Hunt brothers came unstuck years ago, but the memory still gives me a warm feeling. Their attempt to corner the silver market failed when the world's petty thieves unloaded old sporting trophies in tonnage lots — a rare example of poetic justice in the markets. The Leeson case also looks promising. (Nicola Horlick, for whom a million or so may apparently not be enough, could star in another.)

But once the gee-whizz scheme is worked out, each incident tends to be forgotten. Sometimes useful lessons are learnt. The management of derivatives traders is surely tighter since Leeson and Metallgesellschaft, and Mrs Horlick may make City firms usefully more edgy about promoting staff as stars. But sometimes amnesia is almost instant. It is only six months since possibly the biggest loser of them all was exposed: but who now remembers Yasuo Hamanaka?

In a decade as Sumitomo's chief copper trader, he repeatedly tried to squeeze the copper futures market. The estimated cost of closing out the long position he had accumulated was last put at \$4 billion. But the killer blow was delivered not by little men, but by the hedge funds. Hamanaka name is hard to memorise, and Sumitomo survives him. Moreover \$4 billion is the gross figure. Nobody yet knows how much Sumitomo made on his trades in the years before they were exposed. And that is surely the interesting figure. The huge loss is deservedly a joke.

Manipulation creates a false market, and the speculator is not the only victim when it comes unstuck, as thousands of out-of-work Chilean miners can testify. It ought, then, to be stopped. Easier said than done, you may say. The crime is ancient — do you remember "fore-stalling and regrating" from your school days? — and dates back to Roman times at least. In all that time, the perpetrators have usually got away with it but neither that awkward fact, nor the hope that time will produce its

own revenge, should make us tolerate it. It can be stopped, or if not stopped, inconvenienced.

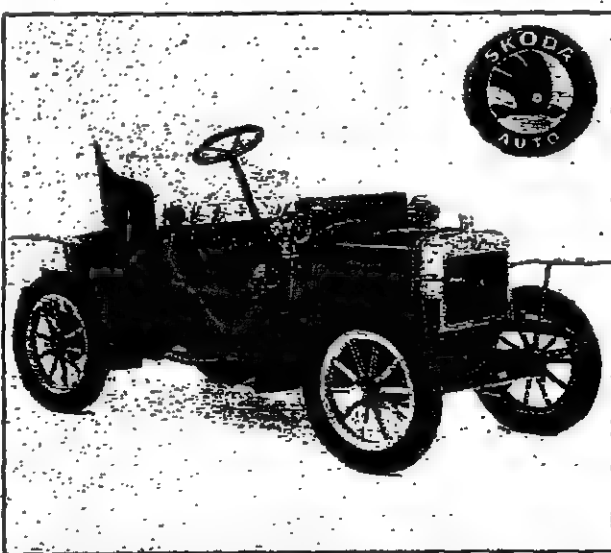
The law is the oldest remedy, but it is also the least effective. The SIB report on the Sumitomo affair seems to forget this. It argues that futures manipulation is already illegal under Section 47 of the Financial Services Act — which was drafted to stop share market rigging. But it seems unlikely that even a Demosthenes, let alone our own prosecuting authorities, could persuade a British court to share this view, or that it would help much if he did. In the US commodity market, manipulation has long been forbidden under the Commodity Exchange Act, but there has hardly ever been a successful prosecution.

What does work in the US, and could work here, is transparency, as Christopher Gilbert, of Queen Mary College, argues in an academic study this week. In the US, traders with large open futures positions have to report them to the authorities every week: the aggregate figures are officially published within three days. This makes stealth impossible. The London Metal Exchange apparently lacks the powers to insist on such disclosure. It set up a "voluntary" reporting system post-Sumitomo, which seems to be working unexpectedly well, with 95 per cent compliance; but a firm rule would be more comforting.

And why should you bother with a set of rules which in practice applies only to professionalists? Because there is a bigger issue here. Ever since the international branches of the US banks came to London to escape intrusive regulation, there has been a danger of a regulatory devaluation race. But the fringe operations of the swinging '60s — remember when newspapers could not use the word "eurodollar" without an explanatory footnote? — have now grown up. The global market is the new word; and global markets demand global rules. If the Anglo-Saxons cannot get their acts together, Brussels may have the last laugh.

Business problems brought to life in the classroom

The Times 100 is again being sent to schools, Fraser Nelson reports



Skoda's efforts to break with its past provide a case study

efforts to revitalise its image. After its deal with Volkswagen, it says, it was presented with an opportunity to break from its past and emerge as the choice of a new generation. Skoda details the task its marketing team had to face: its car had become the subject of too many jokes, but with the new alliance, it could offer Volkswagen technology at a much cheaper price.

The result was its advertising offensive ("We've changed the car — can you change your mind?"). It shows how its marketing unit then split car buyers into four categories, separated by attitude.

These started with the acceptors ("I will consider buying this car") to the persuasives ("I would not like to be the first to own one.") Then came the current rejectors ("It will have to improve before I consider buying one") and lastly the residual rejectors ("I would never consider a Skoda").

Students are asked how the residual rejectors could be converted and what other slogans the car manufacturer could have used to achieve the phoe-

nix-like resurrection of image it demanded. Stakeholding is the concept dealt with by the case study from the Association of Water Services Companies of England and Wales. It explains the logic behind privatising water and about the fears held by its users over the misuse of a monopoly. The users, it explains, are stakeholders who with shareholders and directors hold an interest in the utility. It goes on to explain that stakeholders often have conflicting interests, and invites students to ask how to resolve these tensions.

The roles of the Office of Fair Trading and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission are explained and hypothetical conflicts between Ofwat, the MMC, environmental agencies and the Government are created.

Ultimately The Times 100 aims to give students the information they need to connect their studies to the real world and with the financial pages of newspapers. The publication contains a glossary of business-speak and a guide to using the

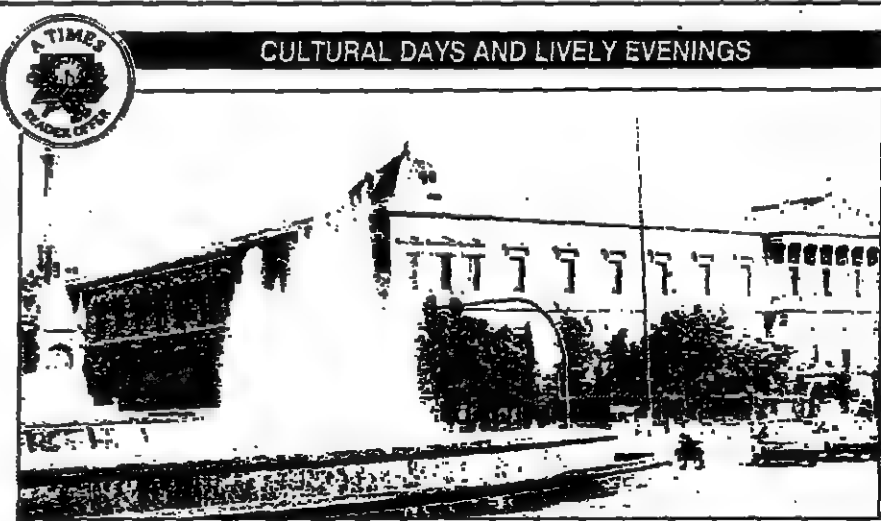
business section of The Times. While history textbooks can hold good for decades, business studies texts tend to date sooner. Their task is to explain an ever-changing environment, and this gives them a very short shelf-life. The development of deregulated water authorities would be covered by few textbooks; indeed, many still in use in the classroom deal with water privatisation as nothing more than a possibility.

Dave Needham, senior lecturer in Business Education at Nottingham Trent University, is one of the authors recruited to compile the case studies. For the past year, he has been talking to teachers and pupils who used the first edition of The Times 100, and helped to draw up improvements to develop the second edition.

"When you discuss concepts and ideas in the classroom, it is difficult for students to gain a picture about how they work," he says. "By giving students examples which they can identify with, the studies provide them with and give them a much firmer grasp of the issues which they are dealing with." "In business studies, it is just not possible to teach the same area in the same way year after year. At the same time, schools do not have the budgets which allow them to update their resources as often as they would like. We found that teachers with limited budgets have welcomed the materials which arrive regularly and free of charge because they provide an updated perspective upon which they can base the delivery of their courses."

The first edition drew praise from everyone from schoolchildren to Tony Blair, the Labour leader, who said he found the series fascinating reading. The second edition is accompanied by a free CD-Rom, which contains all the entries and allows each study to be printed out and used as a handout. They should have reached every UK secondary school by the end of the month.

Companies interested in taking part in the third edition of The Times 100 should contact MBA Publishing, 01937 541541



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Wanna fix Radio 4? Dump The Archers

If it ain't broke, don't fix it." As one who has been blamed for introducing this American vulgarism into the long debate about the BBC (and who has squirmed to hear it prettied up with Anglicisms like, "If it isn't broken, don't try to fix it," or worse, "... to repair it," I would like to offer a modification. "If it ain't broke, don't say you're going to fix it."

Too late, alas, to offer this sage advice to James Boyle, the new Controller of BBC Radio 4. He has already announced that a radical three-year renovation of Middle England's favourite network is on the way.

Will Broadcasting House never learn? Radio 4 listeners do not like change. They can write irate four-page letters in blue ink to Feedback faster than you can say "Dogger, Fisher, German Bight". They have mastered voicemail, fax and e-mail. They tend to get their way. The last thing that any reformer should do is to alert them to mobilise.

Boyle, down from BBC Scotland, can't take back what he has said about preventing Radio 4 from becoming a museum piece. That is a pity, because his instincts are good. If I never hear *Breakaway* again (Boyle is already shaking up this 1950s-ish Saturday travel programme, with its appalling theme tune), I will be a happier woman. I might even be able to put up with *The Archers*.

On second thoughts, I wouldn't. Were I in Boyle's shoes, I would boldly go where none has dared and dump this postwar relic of agricultural didacticism. At the very least I would put it into *Farming Today*.

On Sunday, just to be sure I was brave enough to make this nation-shaking proposal, I tuned in to *The Archers* omnibus edition, to find my longstanding prejudices gloriously confirmed. Did anybody think that the cow — the one with the swollen "udder" — was going to turn out to have mere mastitis? I didn't, not for one minute. But I was wrong to diagnose BSE. An *Archers* script would never be that out of date. The wretched beast, whose dripping milk was (we were told — yuck) the colour of honey, was suffering from the much more topical E-coli infection — the consequence of untrimmed hooves and a mucky yard. A lesson to us all.

My next move would be to jettison all those giggly panel games in which four males laugh themselves sick while a female keeps score. Radio 4 wants younger listeners and it keeps on broadcasting *Just a Minute*. Last Saturday's big wrangle over whether Clement Freud said "buckets" twice or just once is hardly the thing to draw in the young fleeing Radio 1 in the wake of Chris Evans.

Then out would go PM at 5pm, which repeats the news and headlines in the same words so often that by the time they are

served up again for the six o'clock news, you know them by heart. In its place I would put *From Our Own Correspondent*, a jewel wasted in its Saturday 11.30am setting. I'd say goodbye too to *Thought for the Day* — insulting to non-believers and intrusive to those who take the *Today* programme for the political agenda-setting it purports to be.

I would increase the number of live shows. Radio 4's dangerousness is underappreciated. As one who is occasionally given the chance to appear on Melvyn Bragg's Monday morning *Start the Week*, I am always astonished by the intensity of response to the programme. Occasionally, I am asked why such and such a person has been given a seemingly hard time.

"You do know the programme's live?" I say. Yes, they do. What they do not appreciate is the awesome prospect of

embarking on 35 minutes of unscripted conversation with guests who may have to be prodded to start talking. Prodded or not, American guests tend to leave marvelling that they have been on the airwaves for nearly an hour with no station break, commercial or voices phoning in.

If there is a counterpart to Radio 4 elsewhere in the world, I would love to hear about it. The uniqueness of the network lies in the whole variegated Radio 4 mix. Whether you like *Women's Hour* or hate *The News Quiz* is irrelevant. The Radio 4 audience knows that by and large it will hear intelligent speech to which advance thought has been given and that the menu will offer a change of subject in a short time.

My advice to Mr Boyle would be to forget about age. He is entitled to try to fix Radio 4. But at the start he should say that it is a national treasure.

While the British are talking about introducing the V-chip to black out television programmes parents do not want their children to see, the Americans have done something about it.

But done what? Congress passed a law last February to make the chip compulsory in all new television sets. Then the industry agreed to design a rating system to alert the chip to a programme's content.

The result could be more, not less, sex and violence on television. The Supreme Court ruled in June that when people can block offensive programming for themselves, the law is not justified in doing it for them.

According to this week's *New Yorker*, this ruling could allow more unrestrained "adult" programme onto screens than before, to be seen by the millions of young children whose parents do nothing whatsoever to control their viewing. A salutary reminder to Britain that the V-chip protects only those children who don't need it.



BRENDA MADDOX

Express musical chairs

THE BUDGETARY belt is being pulled ever tighter at *The Express*, where staff complain that their every move is now being monitored by consultants.

Heads of department are frustrated by the failure of the bean-counters to understand that contributors cannot all be paid a flat fee but are remunerated according to the worth of their story. Hacks on the road are infuriated that their expenses are being sent back if a single receipt is out of place.

The scheme to squeeze two floors of editorial staff into one so that the vacant level can be let is working a treat. The sports department, which now has an entire supplement to produce every day, complained that the only way it could fit into its allotted space was to draw up rotas for the shared use of screens.

Any offers?

SCOTLAND on Sunday executives are in panic after a disastrous experiment just before Andrew Neil's arrival as chief troubleshooter at the beleaguered newspaper group.



Neil: unsatisfied?

Overnight, they ditched their much-copied business section, demoted Simon Bain, the award-winning editor for eight years, and created *The Money Pages*, edited by the much-travelled Rob Brown, who promised — rather rashly as it turned out — on the front page that he would "expose the profiteers". The format flopped and Brown resigned after eight weeks.

The section has now lost nearly all of its full-time Scottish business specialists.

In an attempt to satisfy Neil's demand for a credible business section, the paper

took the unusual step of advertising the business editor's job on the front page of the section on December 8. It was trumpeted the ad, "one of the most prestigious posts in Scottish journalism". How curious, then, that the tally of applicants for this coveted job should be a figure not unadjacent to, er, zero.

Experienced brain

IT IS never too late to make a starter for ten, according to Ida Staples. At 72, she is about to become the oldest-ever University Challenge contestant. The Cambridge pensioner will be representing the Open University when it takes on the University of Wales next Monday.

Mrs Staples, who likes to finish the *Times* Two crossword before breakfast, is studying for a degree in earth sciences. A trained pharmacist, she took an OU arts degree to occupy her mind after she was widowed and now says she can't stop studying. "I am," she says, "a walking advertisement for the OU."

Not so lovely

YORKSHIRE Tyne Tees's decision to replace *Hollywood Lovers* with a repeat of *Whickers World* on January 8 has done the company more commercial harm than it at first



Whicker: low ratings

thought. Consolidated ratings, recalculated to exclude YTV from the network's results, show that the *Whickers* programme gave TV an audience share of just 26 per cent in the Yorkshire region, against 34 per cent for the rest of the network. The company had claimed ratings just "a couple of points lower" than the rest of the network.

THEY know how to do things in style at the glossy magazine group Condé Nast. A journalist who recently parted company with the *Tatler* received a postcard from the Post Office the other day. It informed her

that it had a letter for her which she could have if she paid the 20p postage and a 20p penalty. After trudging across town to the depot, she found that the unstamped letter was not from an absent-minded relative. It was from her erstwhile employer and contained her P45.

Making waves

GOODWILL might soon be in short supply in Cyprus, where for years islanders living close to British Army bases have been able to receive — free of charge — SSVC, the army television service that broadcasts an amalgam of BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and satellite television programmes (including Premiership football). After two months of what military moles politely refer to as "commercial argy-bargy" with Lumière Television, a local commercial broadcaster, the MoD has reluctantly decided to encrypt the SSVC broadcasts to prevent the locals free-loading.

Forces personnel inside the bases will be able to pick up SSVC as usual; those living outside the perimeter of the bases will be equipped with decoder boxes, courtesy of the British taxpayer. Local entrepreneurs are already competing to see who will be first on the market with a pirate decoder box.

Stretch for the stars



Liner: ad scored free publicity

ADVERTISING executives take heed: forget originality, creativity and art — sex and celebrities are the best way to stretch your advertising pound, according to a survey by Propeller Marketing Communications.

Ads That Make News measures the number of articles about advertising that run in the national press. The survey shows that Wonderbra and Gossard's Glossies scored the most PR spin-off in 1996.

The campaigns scored 51 and 34 mentions respectively, while Bob Hoskins and Rory McGrath secured 48 stories for BT and Gary Lineker garnered 37 hits for Walker's Crisps.

The campaign which most caught the eye of the national newspapers, however, was the Tory party's controversial "demon eyes" pre-election work. This led to a massive 126 national press stories, worth about £5

million in free publicity — not bad for an advertisement that had a media spend of just £125,000.

AN UNSEEMLY row has broken out between adfolk and production companies over who is the most extravagant. The battle has been triggered by an official clampdown on the high cost of advertisements by the Creative Directors' Forum.

The forum believes costs are unnecessarily boosted by prodigal production staff who, it claims, have been known to fly personal chefs to shoot, use film-star trailers on set and hire helicopters to travel around. But production companies are retaliating. They say that creative directors are worse, citing reports of

one who sneaked his curtains into his hotel to get them dry-cleaned at the client's expense, and another who had his luggage sent by DHL to avoid carrying "heavy" bags to and from the airport.

THERE seems to be an increasing trend for vanity casting, the process whereby agency staff star in their own ads. Recent sightings have included Kevin Brown, Bartle Bogle Hegarty's media chief, playing a drinker in a Murphy's press ad, and Dave Buono, the creative director of St Luke's, starring as an office worker in one for Ikea.

It is not clear whether they do this to save money on extras, because they harbour theplan ambitions or whether they just want to earn some cash.

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Heaven knows what religion has to do with C4's new slot, says Maggie Brown



Day of the vampire: the clips on Fortean TV include a beast suspected of killing goats in Puerto Rico by sucking out their blood and livers

Myths and miracles

The programme boasts of screening the world's first autopsy — on a mermaid. It sent a reporter to Puerto Rico in search of a suspected "vampire" which is supposed to have killed hundreds of goats by sucking out their blood and livers.

But just when you think it is getting a bit silly even for Channel 4, viewers are introduced to a shoal of ancient do-gooding Turkish fish which heal skin diseases by nibbling away at the infection.

This is the wacky but professionally produced world of new series Fortean TV, which starts an eight-part, prime-time run next week. It is loosely based on the award-winning monthly cult magazine Fortean Times, which shot to fame through mysteries such as crop circles, has seen sales spiral from 1,800 to 60,000 in the past five years, and is set to expand further with a spin-off bi-monthly called Bizarre next month (cover story: self-combustion, with pictures).

It preaches the notion, suspect but appealing, that science cannot explain everything and that there are happenings outside our ken. It is a magazine message which especially appeals to men, who compose 75 per cent of Fortean Times readers. At the very least it provides them with talking points over a pint.

The approach was laid down 70 years ago by an American writer, Charles Fort, through such titles as *Books of the Damned*, and its evergreen, fundamental appeal has been demonstrated

recently with a vengeance by programmes such as *The X Files* and the array of popular formats dedicated to the paranormal on both ITV and the BBC in the past two years.

But there is a further strange and very British twist to the tale. Fortean TV is styled as a religious programme and is part of Channel 4's agreed portion (52 hours a year) of religious output.

It is presented by an avuncular Church of Wales priest, Father Lionel Fanthorpe, who wears black biker gear and a cheery, middle-aged smile. He ends each screen episode with a happy song. "I hope to establish a link, to show that religion is not cold and fanatical," he says. Surely some mistake.

Not so: Channel 4's commissioning editor for religious programmes, Peter Grimsdale, is proud of the way it stretches the boundaries away from hymn-singing towards the mysteries of the Universe — a shift handily guaranteed to take the series into prime time rather than fringe slots.

Further, the programme has been devised by American-born Peter Stuart, whose dynamic company Rapido specialises in lively, sometimes bad-taste programmes: it makes the revamped *Girlie Show*, *Snadass TV* and *Eurotrash*, which also thrives on a diet of bizarre news.

Fortean TV has abandoned the world of poltergeists and haunted houses in favour of "real life" in real places — but always with a light touch of the surreal. Remember the fuss about the glass building

in San Diego which some thought reflected an image of the Madonna? That is prime Fortean TV material — except that it has been done. One of the programmes has a sequence about a cinnamon bun which has taken the shape of Mother Teresa, and an aubergine whose flesh, when cut open, carried the Arabic symbols for Allah.

"To me, a world where a nun on a bun can be screened



Biker: Father Fanthorpe

next to an item on dead goats, and the way that hair is growing on a Chilean Madonna contributes to a much richer mix than usual," says Stuart. "This format would allow us to do the world's tallest man, too. It's all very healthy."

Grimsdale denies he is engaged in a cynical exercise or seeking to encourage the gullible to retreat to a non-rational mental cave after centuries of painful scientific progress. He

has received praise for two series of *Desperately Seeking Something*, in which Peter McCarthy sought out alternative believers and celebrated the summer solstice with a coven of five witches on the Brecon Beacons.

"I expected to have scorn heaped on me," says Grimsdale. "I was genuinely surprised by the reaction. There is a whole sub-culture of belief out there. One of the difficulties for religious programmes is that they have been so tied to conventional ideas. All faiths are full of strange happenings and things called miracles."

"Take the incident of straw falling from the sky in a car park (the series describes this, and also mucks up a report of 30 fish falling on to people's heads from the sky). One hundred years ago that would have been thought of as a miracle. Many people still do think like that. The stories in Fortean TV are about things people believe they have seen, unexplained phenomena."

But is it anything to do with religion?

Mike Dash, the publisher of Fortean Times, is very pleased with the clips of the shows he has seen so far because they embody the Fortean approach accurately. Science, he repeats, cannot explain everything. But even he is flabbergasted that it is being commissioned as a religious programme.

The Right Rev George Austin, Archdeacon of York, said Fortean TV sounded as if it had as much to do with religion as the *Sunday Sport* had to do with journalism as

practised by *The Sunday Times*. "I'm not sure this is for serious people," he says. "More for people in anoraks with funny voices. But making modern religious television is a difficult area."

This was formally acknowledged last November in the first published report of the Central Religious Advisory Committee, whose members advise the BBC and Independent Television Commission on religious broadcasting. It drew up a seven-point list of how a programme may fulfil its function as being religious. The list includes "dealing with a view of the life not enclosable by the visible world" and which acknowledged the "spiritual dimension".

What will they make of Fortean TV?

Fortean TV, Wednesday, January 29, 9pm.

Seven-day weakness grips the Express

Is The Express seven-day newspaper experiment beginning to look like a failure? Even the UK Press Gazette, the rather cautious trade magazine, talks of the Express as "still in free fall".

Certainly the ABC figures for December 1996 make dreadful reading for Lord Stevens and Lord Hollick's United News & Media group. The average daily sales of the Express slumped to 1,134,870, giving it a lead of just 2,500 over The Daily Telegraph.

That is a fall of more than 10 per cent compared with December 1995, while the rolling six-month average figure is down 5.3 per cent. Over the same period, the six-month figure for the Daily Mail is up 11.3 per cent at 2,090,503.

The Sunday edition of the Express is faring even worse. Year on year its sales have dropped 13.6 per cent while The Mail on Sunday has continued to edge upwards. So despite heavy investment in extra paging and new glossy magazines, has The Express's big idea for one staff to produce a seven-day paper been a failure?

Not surprisingly Stephen Grabiner, chief executive of United Newspapers,

says no. "The decline in The Express's fortunes was never going to be turned round in one month or even a year," he says. "It's going to take a long time and a lot of money and we are confident that we will settle on an upward trend."

Mr Grabiner points to his January decision to lower the price of The Express to 20p every Saturday as a sign of the company's commitment to invest. The sales on Saturdays have risen by 350,000 copies to 1.7 million, he claims, and the Sunday edition is up 100,000 with the help of special 35p vouchers.

Rivals accept that The Express's decision to join the price war, albeit belatedly, has increased this month's sales by about 50-60,000 a day. However, after the heavy investment and a huge redundancy programme, it is difficult to believe that The Express is now making any profit.

"Complete and utter rubbish," retorts Mr Grabiner. "We made money in '96 and we will make significantly more in '97 — anyway the cost of the redundancies has been taken below the line."

Jeremy Deedes, the managing director of the Telegraph, accepts that The Express's 20p Saturday price has, for the time being, stopped the rot. "But I believe that we will overtake them soon," he says. "The newspaper world can be very cruel. Their two new weekend magazines are not bad but it is usually a bad time to add new products when you are going downhill, as we have seen at both The Express and The Observer. If the quality of the rest of the paper is not right it doesn't matter what extra paging or magazines you put in."

Mr Deedes, a former deputy editor of the Daily Express, argues that one of the fundamental problems facing his rival is its constant changes in editorial direction.

"One Editor has taken The Express down-market, the next upmarket and so on; those switches are very confusing. It becomes a rollercoaster ride in which readers fall off or jump off and they become more reluctant to return and take a new look."

Mr Deedes does not believe that price cutting will cure the ills of The Express, especially so long after The Times and The Sun cut their prices. "Price-cutting gives readers a false impression of what a newspaper costs to produce and it is difficult to put the price back up without losing sales," he argues.

The Express's chronic problems are rooted more in journalism than in marketing, he argues. "I have always operated on the basis that every successful national newspaper has to provide something that is 'the best'. The Times may have the best letters or perhaps leaders (although I don't believe that myself).

"The Telegraph has the best sports and news coverage. The Mail is very good at what I call 'white trash' journalism — polemic and women's features — but when you come to The Express it's difficult to see where it is absolutely 'the best'."

At Associated Newspapers senior executives believe that the seven-day experiment at The Express is a dud. Cynically, they suggest that it was principally a way of sucking 80 journalists to reduce costs rather than a great editorial innovation.

Where seven-day papers with one staff are successful in America, there is little or no competition. In Britain The Express faces enormous pressure from 11 national dailies and nine aggressive Sunday rivals. Without a specific editor and staff dedicated to planning and creating a Sunday edition, it is difficult to see The Express on Sundays regaining some of the 930,000 copies by which it trails The Mail on Sunday.

The gap between The Express and the Mail continues to widen and in what may prove a major psychological blow to The Express, Associated executives claim that the Daily Mail is also poised to outsell The Express in Scotland where once the Crusader seemed unassailable.

Sir David English, chairman of Associated Newspapers, says: "We welcome the battle and rather than cutting our price we are investing in quality journalism. It is up to the public to decide what they prefer."

Mr Grabiner remains unabashed: "We are very happy with the seven-day venture so far... Of course, there is still a lot to do and it won't be done overnight. We are going to put in more money, money that was not available to past editors, and we are doubling the amount of colour."

It is, perhaps, too early to write off The Express experiment, but one thing is certain: it will not be able to reverse its decline unless its owners are committed to journalism, rather than cash, for some years to come.

Sir Nicholas Lloyd was Editor of the Daily Express from April 1960 to November 1965.

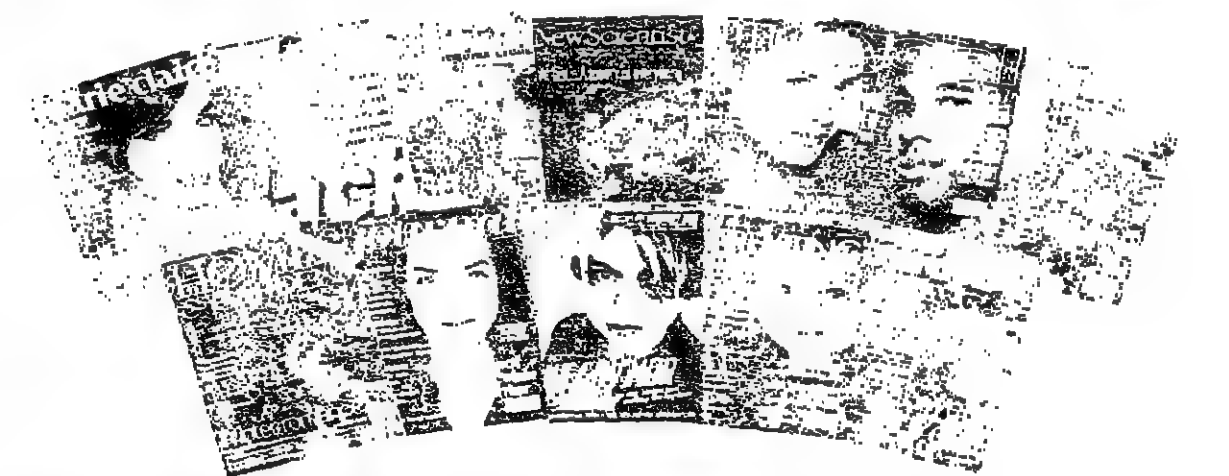
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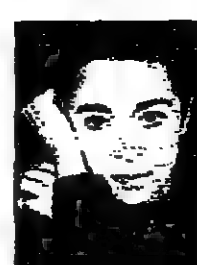
Terry Farrell's new £11m building in Hong Kong signals the British Council's Chinese ambitions



MUSIC

Castanets out: the guitarist Paco Peña brings his flamenco troupe back to London

THE TIMES ARTS



RISING STAR

With 16 theatre productions under her belt, Vicky Featherstone takes over at Paines Plough



OFFER

Special prices to watch Anthony Newley playing Scrooge: see the Theatre Club panel for details

Flying the cultural flag in Hong Kong

Next week, in almost the last royal duty of the Crown Colony of Hong Kong, the Prince of Wales will open the British Council's striking new building. Designed by Terry Farrell, with its provocative facade pointing imperiously down Supreme Court Road into the skyscraper-congested Central District, the new headquarters is a defiant British statement.

But why, just five months before Britain hands dominion over Hong Kong to the Chinese, has the British taxpayer stumped up £11 million for such a gesture? The answer is that the British Council is not only staying in Hong Kong after the handover, but expanding its operations throughout China.

Better known overseas than at home, the British Council was founded more than 60 years ago as a propaganda agency and has developed into a global cultural mission. In 1948 its Hong Kong operation was set up in a couple of Nissen huts, and its principal job remains the teaching of English. This not only spreads English-language culture globally, but also helps Britain's £7 billion a year and opens up trade opportunities.

Hong Kong and China now constitute the prime target for the council's cultural ambitions. "The arts are vital to us, and not just as a safety valve when all other outlets have been repressed; they are of long-term benefit politically, economically," says Tom Buchanan, director of the British Council in Hong Kong. "If you want to project an image of Britain's connection with the avant-garde and innovation, which we must here, it's through the arts that you can

From Nigel Kennedy to the RSC, British artists will still be going east after June. Simon Tait reports

do it. So we must play that card for all it's worth."

The council's apolitical nature is sacred. Next door to the new building is the British Consulate which will be our diplomatic presence, and Buchanan had to insist that the flagpole which was to have stood equidistant between the two should be moved as far away from the council building as possible, so as not to prejudice the political neutrality on which he trades.

He looks beyond Hong Kong post-1997, to the potential goldmine across the border. China has said that it plans to build 10,000 new cities and the British, Americans, Australians, French and Germans are all jostling for the trading contracts that this bold pledge implies.

Hong Kong has anticipated the shift for years without quite knowing the implications. "Nobody overplays the political changeover," says Lo King Man, director of the Academy for Performing Arts, which was founded in 1986 with British Council help. "But perhaps we didn't move fast enough to distinguish our own cultural identity. The line between Western and Oriental culture is not all that clear."

The APA is a partner in one of the most ambitious artistic events of the changeover,

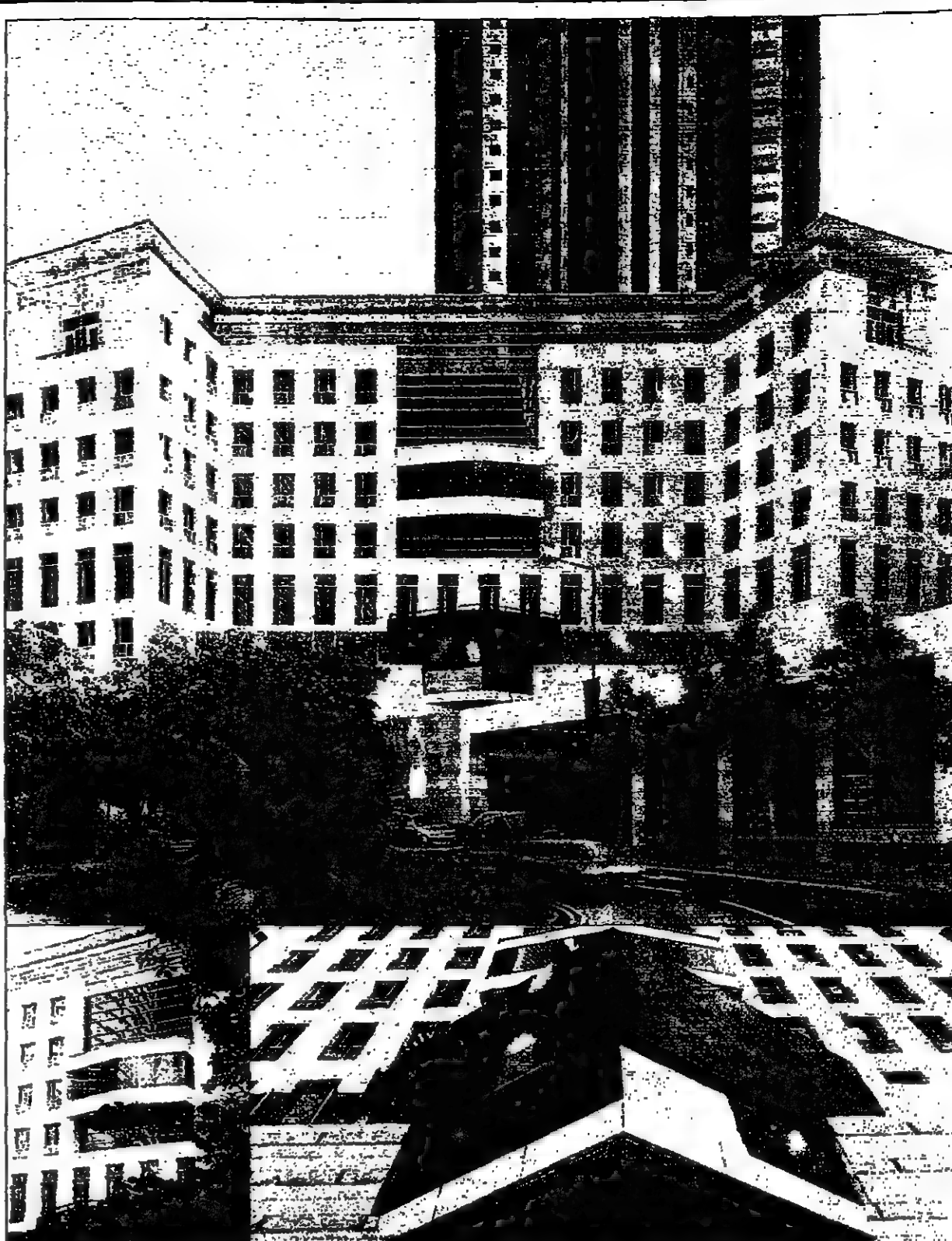
when the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields comes in June with Nigel Kennedy and Julian Lloyd Webber. The 40-strong chamber orchestra will be augmented by the brightest local students to create a full symphony orchestra, plus chorus, for a rendition of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Then in August the London Contemporary Dance School comes to the APA to give workshops and performances; in March the jazz composer Stan Tracey will bring his band, followed in April by the Richard Alston Dance Company. Both will tour mainland China, as will the Academy of St Martin, with British Council help.

The urban and regional authorities of Hong Kong also rely heavily on British Council support to bring British performers to their impressive venues. Urban Services run the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, which comprises a 2,200-seat concert hall, where the Academy of St Martin will perform, and the London Sinfonietta and English Chamber Orchestra are due to make return visits in 1997. There is also a 1,700-seat theatre which has put on *Les Misérables* and *Phantom of the Opera* in the past 18 months, and in 1998 hopes to stage *Miss Saigon*. Cheek by Jowl is due this year, and

negotiations are looking good with Nottingham Playhouse for its *Animal Farm*.

Each of the outlying New Territories communities has its own theatre of around 1,800 seats, hosting the likes of the National Youth Music Theatre, the Philharmonia and the Halk. But in June the highlight is likely to be the latest work of the collaborative English-Chinese company Chung Ying Theatre, with a children's play by the English lecturer Dino Mahoney about a child's flight through time from 19th-century Britain to modern Hong Kong on the back of a dragon. It is one of eight productions that Chung Ying has scheduled for this year, subsidised by the new Hong Kong Arts Development Council, which is modelled on the Arts Council of England.

After the Chinese New Year in February the Hong Kong Arts Festival begins, bringing the RSC's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and — a surprise box-office success — the opera *Marco Polo*, commissioned by the Edinburgh Festival but so far never performed there. Kau Ng, the festival's executive director, is cautiously optimistic. "Some in the arts community may have worries about what will happen, that more Chinese arts will be forced on us, but we have been told it is the intention to keep the system here as it is. The importance of the British Council in this has been longstanding and we are looking long into the future with them." And what of the spread into China? The British Council has offices in Peking and Shanghai, and a third opens this summer in Guangdong, formerly Canton, the province adjacent to Hong Kong.



Looking beyond the handover: the new British Council headquarters in Hong Kong, designed by Terry Farrell

Skirting issues in no little style

IT WAS hard to know what to expect from Project Arts Centre's new temporary home — the Mint, down an alley and above a pool hall — and CoisCéim Dance Theatre is mischievously happy to exploit any uncertainty. Leading the audience into a bare studio setting, the company began to claim the space by jostling and flitting with their guests, many of whom obligingly took their seats on the floor, only to find when the lights came up a few moments later that the cast had all filtered off-stage and were now sitting in the auditorium, glowering at them.

It is CoisCéim's self-appointed task to take in hard popular notions of contemporary Irish dance and lead them into fresh territory, far from any showbizzy Celtic extravaganza. The company's approach has been to create work that might as easily be called physical theatre as dance. *Hit and Run*, their latest production, does contain passages of straight Irish dance, but even then dancers are as likely to be moving to the sound of distant gunshots, police sirens or movie dialogue. *Riverdance* it ain't.

Soundscape by Bell Heit-

DANCE

Hit and Run Dublin

copter (Conor Kelly and Sam Park) are the key here, their crisp, clear 3D found sounds setting the tone, defining the space in which the dancers work every bit as much as Stephen McManus's cage of thin, bright light, or the cut-up video projections.

The strong setting provides an apt platform for some equally exciting work from CoisCéim's dancers. A sex scene becomes a hilarious and surreal whirlpool of apologies and intertwined limbs: a joust between the male and female cast members leaves David Bolger (choreographer of the piece) hunched on the floor covered in blood, pleading for help that never arrives.

Particularly outstanding was Simone Litchfield, who danced with a degree of arrogant funkiness startling even here, where that quality was hardly in short supply.

Hit and Run's most obvious shortcoming was that while taking on the subjects of urban Dublin, the piece never explored them in any real sense. Instead, Bolger's choreography uses crime and violence as a springboard producing any number of great moments, without ever taking an authorial line. If Irish dance really is growing up, it may have to take more responsibility for its actions.

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The world's best flamenco guitarist — probably — is in his second home for a concert season. Joanna Pitman reports

Reign of Spain falls mainly on Peña

If you did not already know who Paco Peña is, you would not have much of a chance trying to guess his profession by just looking at him. Unless, that is, you make a point of studying people's hands. His are a giveaway. Small and delicate, but powerful, they could easily belong to a concert pianist, but Peña is a flamenco guitarist, a man whose heart lies among the hot rhythms and drumming heels of his native Spain.

There are those who would say that he is the flamenco guitarist, the best in the world. And he may well be. We will be able to judge for ourselves when his troupe begins a month-long residency at Sadler's Wells Peacock Theatre on February 4.

"London has always been good to me," he says. "I first came in the mid-1940s as an accompanist with a flamenco group. I had a small solo spot and it was an enormous success, so much so that I couldn't believe how popular solo flamenco guitar could be, because in Spain guitarists always play with the group."

When Peña returned in 1968, his first concert was at the Festival Hall, where he shared the stage with Jimi Hendrix. "He was the lead act, but it was a sort of guitar festival in which I had the flamenco slot. Again I got an amazing response. A fire was lit in me and I started doing concerts all around Europe. But somehow London was where people had the strongest craving for exotic things like flamenco."

In the early 1970s he set up

his own flamenco group. "We had the absolute minimum, just a singer, myself on the guitar and a husband and wife team of dancers. They were stunningly beautiful together, subtle and correct. We always performed authentic, traditional flamenco. That has always been my aim, to keep as close as possible to the real flamenco."

The "real flamenco", however, is difficult to pin down. For a start, it is never written down (anything scored on a page will be phoney, Peña says). Its musicians rely on laws but those of gravity, and the music and movements seem to exist only in the minds of their maker. "None of us can read music," Peña says. "Only the most basic structure is decided in advance and the rest is improvisation."

And that is how it always has been, ever since the beginnings of flamenco in the late 15th century, when the Spanish renaissance left Andalusia in turmoil, with Arabs, Jews and Gypsies wandering the hills, dispossessed and destitute, huddling together for



Paco Peña: "London has always been good to me"

cultural warmth and producing the songs of persecution and suffering that have become the core of the repertoire. "The present form of flamenco crystallised about 250 years ago, but more recent musical trends from all over the world have had some influence on the development

of sounds," Peña says. "It is more sharply rhythmic, more syncopated with more aggressive harmonies. Jazz has been absorbed too, but we also try to stay as true to the original as possible."

Peña was never taught flamenco — in fact, he claims it is virtually impossible to teach it. Rather it is a sort of frame of mind, a natural instinct. Peña himself has the prototype flamenco background; his life has been moulded with the single intention of rising out of the poverty of his birth.

He grew up in a family of nine children, sharing a house with ten other families in Cordoba. "We were poor, we were crowded. But we had a sort of communal spirit. Whenever there was a feast, everyone would sing or dance or play the guitar, improvising as we went along. My elder brother had a guitar and he taught me a few chords when I was six. I saw that it was the only thing that might take me out of that house. I joined folk music groups and then at 14 I started travelling."

Peña has come far since

those days. Now 54, he recently gave 50 performances in a month in Australia, and he has performed in 12 countries in the past year. But flamenco is his life's fuel and every so often he has to return to Cordoba to recharge his batteries. London, however, remains second in his heart — as long as it continues to give him a warm welcome.

Peña Peña Flamenco Dance Company is at the Peacock Theatre 0171-314 8800 from Feb 4 to March 1

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THE TIMES THEATRE CLUB

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■ OPERA

Nikolaus Lehnhoff introduces his new production of Hans Pfitzner's *Palestrina* at Covent Garden



■ CONCERTS 1

Benjamin Luxon narrates an unusual new work for orchestra — plus audience participation

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ CONCERTS 2

The young violinist Midori shows her serious side in a challenging recital at the Bridgewater Hall



■ TOMORROW

How does Michael Fox rate in *The Frighteners*? Read Geoff Brown's verdict on this week's new movies

Epic hymn to a Renaissance man

OPERA: As Covent Garden rehearses *Palestrina*, Ian Brunskill meets the director of Pfitzner's masterpiece

If ever an opera needed saving from its detractors, it is Hans Pfitzner's *Palestrina*. Premiered in Munich in 1917, and receiving its first fully professional British staging next week at Covent Garden, it has long been revered by those who (in the words of one of their bogymen, Pierre Boulez) suffer from a nostalgia for the past as a "paradise lost" and react violently against a future that seems to them to be a terrifying "nightmare". Which has rather tended to put off everyone else.

It certainly put off Nikolaus Lehnhoff, at least at first. Now in his late fifties, but with the energy and enthusiasm of a man two decades younger, the German director is best known to British audiences for the outstanding Jandek cycle he began ten years ago at Glyndebourne. His Munich production of Hans Werner Henze's *Prince of Homburg* was also seen at English National Opera last year, and it was the British premiere of the same composer's *Das verirrte Meer* that he originally planned to do at Covent Garden. When that idea ran into problems, he was surprised to be asked by the Royal Opera's Nicholas Payne if he would like to tackle *Palestrina* instead.

"My first reaction was: *Palestrina*? Er... yes, it's a German opera. My second was: please don't go away and think about it!"

Lehnhoff blames Pfitzner himself for the work's rather gloomy reputation. The composer's character, he says, "has done his music no good". Insecure, quarrelsome and ambitious, Pfitzner was "caught between so many styles". His political conservatism and rationalism — spiritual and idealistic at first, but increasingly politicised by the First World War — cannot be overlooked, but they have "covered up what is interesting in his work: there are so many things that you have to push aside if you want to get to its essence".

It is an essence well worth discovering, he insists. "*Palestrina*

has a brilliant text, by the composer himself, and it's first-rate music." For Thomas Mann, one of its earliest and most ardent admirers, *Palestrina* marked the end of an era — a last, late product of a 19th-century tradition, "the funeral hymn of Romantic opera". In it, and in its view of artistic inspiration, Mann discerned a "sympathy with death", which Lehnhoff explains as a "very 19th-century, very German idea of getting your spiritual roots from something which doesn't exist, which was there but which is now gone. So that you have to establish something inside yourself to make up for it."

But that, Lehnhoff feels, is only half the story. Pfitzner had an uneasy relationship with modernity, and he dramatises it in his (fictional) account of the 16th-century composer Palestrina's response to the debates about musical innovation that accompanied the Council of Trent. But *Palestrina* — not least for the self-consciousness with which it considers what is possible and desirable in contemporary music — is a powerfully modern opera: to Bruno Walter, 30 years after he conducted the first performance, it remained "one of the mightiest stage works of the century".

Lehnhoff had known of the work and its composer since childhood, but they had never been part of his musical or artistic life. An elderly aunt of his had witnessed and told him of the occasion in Strasbourg when Pfitzner, as music director, had had to step in for an indisposed Beckmesser, midway through *Meistersinger*; and as a student in Vienna and Munich, he had seen *Palestrina* several times himself. But he had always been impressed less by the work than by the great performers it attracted: Julius Fenzl, Christian Ludwig, Sena Jurinac, Fritz Wunderlich and Hans Hotter (who once said Pfitzner's Cardinal Borromeo was his favourite role after Wotan).



PALESTRINA
PERMANENT
DOWN STAGE
FLATTAGE
FLAT (A)
OP.

"Whatever its influences, *Palestrina* has its own musical impetus," says Nikolaus Lehnhoff. "It's not Wagnerian or Straussian. It's not atmospheric: it's archaic music"

The difficulty of fielding singers of that calibre throughout the opera's huge cast is one of the obstacles facing any new staging; but with the highly regarded American-born tenor, Thomas Moser making his Covent Garden debut in the title role, and a supporting line-up that includes Thomas Allen, Kurt Rydl, Sergei Leiferkus and Nicolai Gedda, the Royal Opera looks set to meet that particular challenge.

Meeting the work's other challenges is Lehnhoff's problem. Covent Garden's last venture into the darker corners of the German repertoire was with another classic

"Künstlerdrama", Hindemith's *Mathis der Maler*, a work which, like *Palestrina*, explores — through a fictionalised account of a historical artist's life — the relationship between art and the world in which it is made. On that occasion, a baffling and boring production did the challenge of introducing an audience to a piece it may not know. "It helps me to look anew at an opera."

In Germany *Palestrina* is too often viewed through a veil of piety, which Lehnhoff was determined to strip away. "The form of the work reflects *Parsifal*, but a lot of the content reflects *Meistersinger*."

What is needed is "less Schopenhauer and more Freud". If *Palestrina*'s epic structure is to be brought to theatrical life, otherwise, "the whole thing just floats away".

Lehnhoff refuses to be perturbed by Pfitzner's diatribes against musical "futurism". "Today you get the sense that there was this total conflict between separate camps. But it was not so clear-cut. Pfitzner conducted Mahler and Mahler conducted him; he invited Schoenberg to conduct his own pieces in Strasbourg, and Schoenberg defended him after the Second World War; he said that Stravinsky's world was not his world, but he

had to agree that he was a master. Nobody mentions that."

The image of Pfitzner valiantly defending tradition against the onslaught of his iconoclastic contemporaries does less than justice to his music's originality. "Whatever its influences, it has its own impetus," Lehnhoff says. "It's not Wagnerian or Straussian. It's not atmospheric music: it's archaic, expressive music. In that it's closer to Schoenberg. It's not the music of the 19th century." Even as it looks to the past, Pfitzner's masterpiece is of its own time, and of ours.

● *Palestrina* opens next Tuesday at the Royal Opera House (0171-304 4000)

CONCERTS: High-quality recital by a young violinist let down by the Bridgewater acoustics; plus a difficult debut for a new assistant conductor

Seriously fine playing

THERE is no more serious violinist than Midori. There is, it is true, a calculated mystique about her — what's her other name, where's she from, how old is she? — but this is a matter of what is withheld

from the public rather than what is revealed to it in a wet T-shirt.

Her recital programmes seem, moreover, designed to deter all but the most committed enthusiast for the violin

and piano repertoire. Even so, as at Symphony Hall three years ago, Midori and McDonald (Robert McDonald, if that is not giving too much away) attracted an impressively large following to the Bridgewater Hall at the weekend.

If the Manchester audience heard the violinist not quite at



Midori: high level of emotional involvement

her best it was largely because, with a large and empty space on the platform behind her, the acoustic was too reverberant to project a focused sound into the auditorium. There were attendant problems with balance and with clarity in the piano part too, but these were marginal considerations in comparison with the rare opportunity to experience committed interpretations of works by George Enescu and Nicolas Flagello, between more familiar items by Mozart and César Franck.

The American composer's *Declamation*, Op 54 — written 30 years ago in much the same romantic tradition as the Franck Sonata — survived the conditions more or less intact. Enescu's Sonata No 3 in A minor, on the other hand, is a very much more delicate growth, its textures minutely detailed to reflect the natural and folk-instrumental sounds of the Romanian countryside. Such poetic moments as the beginning of the nocturnal slow movement, where violin harmonics are exotically inflected over quietly repeated notes high on the piano,

require an intimate setting. It is an indication of the quality of the performance, and of the concern of the two instrumentalists for balance and blend of colour, that so much of Enescu's uniquely inspired scoring made its evocative effect even here.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of Midori's playing is its emotional involvement. Certainly, although Mozart's Sonata in F, K 376, was scarcely the kind of work she could identify with, Franck's Sonata in A excited much expressive spontaneity in both the violinist and her hard-pressed pianist. It was just a pity that, baring towards the end of the recital, she allowed her intonation to wander off-centre. In two Kreisler encores — in the melodic grace of *Schön Rosmarin* and the unlikely ragtime charm of *Syncope* — equanimity was restored.

GERALD LARNER

TOMMASO PLACIDI, the London Symphony Orchestra's new assistant conductor, was made to work hard in Thursday's lengthy Barbican concert. But he also appeared to enjoy himself in the premiere of Stephen Montague's *The Creatures Indoors*, a 45-minute piece for narrator and orchestra aimed at children in the manner of a contemporary *Carnival of the Animals*.

Commissioned as part of the BT Celebration Series, The

LSO/Placidi Barbican

Creatures Indoors sets nine sharply imaginative poems by Jo Shapcott, mostly dealing with nature's unfriendly species. Montague, always a versatile composer, has responded with a score full of pulsating energy, rich in onomatopoeic effects. Buzzing, agitated strings summon up the flies that return in a sequence of interludes, *à la* Promenades in Mussorgsky's *Pictures*. Audience participation is invited, among other things to provide the "hiss" of snakes and the "grand chorus of musical boxes" that evokes a bewitching dreamscape towards the end.

Benjamin Luxon's lively narration kept the audience enthralled. Beginning in grandfatherly storytelling tones, he soon leapt into menacing action as a hungry vulture, slipping in and out of speech-song. Performances like this should open many new ears to music as the work is taken up by seven other orchestras around the country (the next performance is in Reading on February 4).

The rest of the programme focused on three contrasting areas of the repertoire, as if to

Buzz, hiss, miss

showcase Placidi. Alas, he only really proved himself with an account of a suite from Stravinsky's *Firebird*, strong on atmosphere and colour. In Mozart he was dull and heavy-handed: despite fluent

playing from the LSO's principal oboist, Roy Carter, the Oboe Concerto in C never sparkled, though the orchestra's fine strings played with bold attack. But the normally magnificent LSO was hardly

recognisable in *Till Eulenspiegel*, here burdened with more bombast than even Strauss ever dreamt of. Placidi directed a clumsy performance, without continuity between its witty episodes: perhaps, like me, he forgot to pack his sense of humour.

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Midori Manchester

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SECRETARIES
PLUS

Football will not stand for return to terraces

Politicians! Don't you just love 'em? The latest brainwave from the political front is a call to bring back the terracing at Premier-ship football clubs. Remember Hillsborough? We all do, alas, but not it appears. Tom Pendry, Labour's Shadow Sports Minister.

No, perhaps I do him an injustice. It seems that the event does strike a chord somewhere. But we need not worry about a repeat, he says, because nuclear scientists — not a class remarkable for its record in saving human life — have come up with a "crowd pressure monitoring system". So when you cram 'em in like cattle, at least with this device you will know all about it.

Now obviously this scores Pendry a cheap point on enthusiasts for nostalgia and lovers of "atmosphere". But it is hopelessly out of touch with football, the police and, for that matter, the Labour Party. The interesting thing about the business is not the old chestnut of standing versus sitting — I can't remember who it was who said that the only person who can sing sitting down is Val Doonican — but the extraordinary ineptitude of politicians when it comes to sport.

Briefly, Pendry's plan, apart from

the superficial appeal of his salt-of-the-earthery, cuts right against everything that football now is. It is no longer a working class ritual. It is a fashionable and bloated plutocracy. The introduction of all-seat stadiums was intended to prevent another disaster, and you could hardly quarrel with the principle.

As a secondary matter, it was to attack hooliganism. "We don't want your hooligans in our stadiums," Ted Croker, then secretary of the Football Association, said to Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher, another politician made to look a fool by sport, was enraged. She responded with a policy of implacable hostility to football, spearheaded by her failed attempt to introduce the Orwellian membership card scheme.

Football solved the hooliganism problem without Thatcher, but by pure Thatcherism. It priced the hooligans out of the market. All-seat stadiums changed the entire demography of football-watching. You need to be a good deal richer than you used to be; young men of the fighting ages, what used to be the call-up ages, cannot afford to go.

Football certainly does not wish to go back towards its former troubles

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

in deference to this strange alliance between a politician and nuclear science. Economic science will do for them. True, the bill for that viewpoint will come in eventually, for there is a bill for everything in the end. The bill for the policy of "sell it cheap and cram 'em in" was paid in human life.

The bill for the present plutocracy will be paid in a lesser currency: in disillusion, in the loss of attention of

the followers of fashion, in the alienation of the people of football's heartland. Football is a South Sea Bubble of heady finance. Of course the bubble will burst, and of course football will survive, in a less giddy form. But right now, neither football directors nor football crowds want the terraces back. And for those who love standing and Bovril, there are plenty of salt-of-the-earth clubs outside the Premiership and the first division. Go to Barnet: a good day out, and one that will never suffer the slings and arrows of fashion.

The eccentric thing about the Pendry proposal is that he seems so out of kilter with the Labour Party. But it is even thus when politicians get involved with sport. A specialised approach to any subject always stops you seeing things whole, and politicians tend to see everything as a matter of personal power and party faction. That is why the politicians' tendency is to trivialise, and when it comes to sport, they manage at the same time to trivialise a triviality while failing to comprehend sport's genuine importance.

Politicians are famous for grasping the wrong end of the stick. They also seek control: and the joyous thing

about sport is that it is not amenable to control. Ask Adolf Hitler. He staged the Berlin Olympics: Jesse Owens said more about Nazism than a thousand moralists.

In this country, politicians are also eager to be associated with success. The European championship finals of last summer were interpreted as an attempt by John Major to recreate the national "feel-good" factor of the World Cup-winning summer of 1966. The honours list is always full of athletes, because it makes the prime minister look like a good sport.

Politicians also love to dissociate themselves publicly from sporting failures. The poor performance of the England cricket team in Zimbabwe was a glorious excuse for various politicians to talk about "national disgrace", "send 'em home" and so on.

Sport, being a volatile business, depending more on the talent and mood of an individual rather than of a nation, regularly makes politicians look fools. Not that that makes sport unique. The cry used to be "Keep politics out of sport." It would be a start if we could just keep politicians out. Sport, after all, is about wild and impossible dreams.

An airing for fresh ideas

Fresh Air, Radio 4, 8.30pm.

The media are often accused of being open only to professionals: this new series is an impressive response. *Fresh Air* is the product of a BBC appeal to media students to send in their own radio features and tonight it starts with a tape by Emma Hancock called *The Dream Sequence*. It is innovative in style, using echo effectively (it occasionally overdoes it) and there are some interesting scientific contributions about dreams and their role in the five stages of sleep. Another of tonight's tapes, *Nightshift*, is by Julian Powry and records the work of an all-female ambulance crew on night duty in London. All the work in the programme is impressive enough to keep established programme-makers on their toes.

Mike Harding's Yorkshire Dales, Radio 2, 9.00pm.

This is not so much a travel story as a love story and it has the incidental benefit of making one wonder whether the Whitehall obsession with boundary changes is an attempt to ensure that British children leave school with no idea as to where they live. Harding is that rare Lancastrian, a man who wishes he had been born in Yorkshire. He loves the Dales and has done so since childhood. The only problem being that Denisdale is actually in Cumbria, but the avuncular Harding correctly ignores this. People there think they live in the Dales; they think, therefore they are.

Peter Bazargan

TENNIS

Moya wins undercover campaign

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN MELBOURNE

THE heatwave that has paralysed Melbourne this week and caused hundreds of fires across the neighbouring bushland ended late yesterday afternoon when the northerly wind changed direction and the temperature dropped. The evening turned out to be cool and rain is forecast for today, with conditions reverting to normal for the rest of the tournament.

It was so hot yesterday morning, however, that the retractable roof at Melbourne Park was closed for the first time. Neither of the Spaniards who contested the first match "indoors" on an air-conditioned Centre Court, Carlos Moya and Felix Mantilla, was consulted before the decision was taken. Moya won 7-5, 6-2, 6-7, 6-3 and will meet Michael Chang, the conqueror of Tim Henman, in the semi-finals.

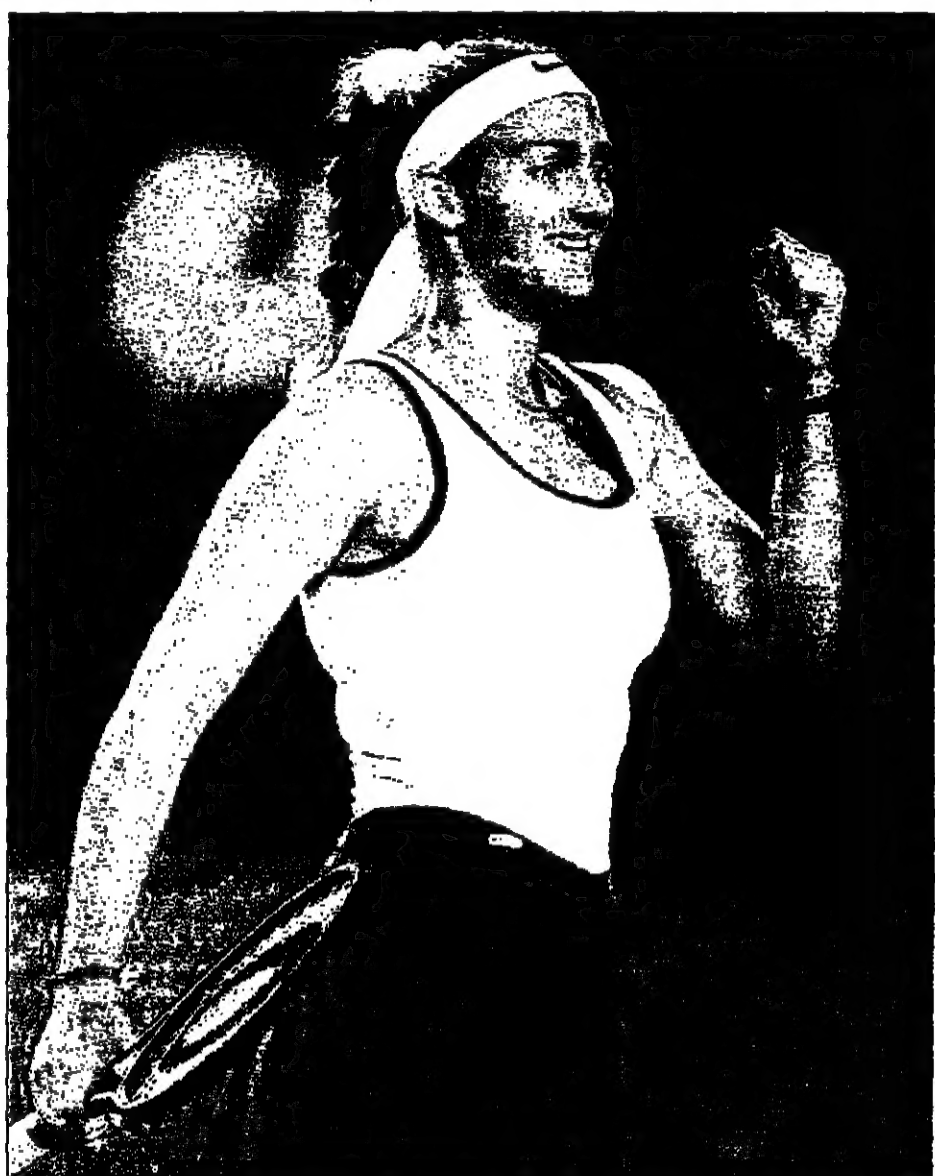
In the evening on Centre Court, with the roof open, Mary Pierce, the French Canadian who won the women's title here two years ago, beat Sabine Appelmans, the Belgian left-hander, to secure a semi-final confrontation with Amanda Coetzer. Pierce lost the first set 6-1 but rallied to take the second 6-4 and, after being 3-0 down in the third, she finished strongly to win in three minutes over two hours.

She is such an infuriating actress. In the first game alone there were five twists of her ponytail and when she was not rearranging her headband she was demanding a towel from the ballboys. All the time she played to the gallery, shooting looks of surprise, disdain and delight to the spectators, not all of whom were taken by this show.

If you can imagine a hybrid of Little Bo Peep and Vanessa Redgrave at her most mannered then that is Pierce. Like all moderate actresses, she has her claques and they were out in force here, cheering her every shot. Appelmans was more worthy of the crowd's support for the gallantry of her play, but sports crowds are not always as discriminating as they might be. The show pony rides on, but she is heading for a fall.

Appelmans had her chances. At 3-5 in the second set she held two game points on Pierce's service before conceding, and after that she never looked quite the same player. It was a disappointment for her, after she had beaten Conchita Martinez.

Moya, who beat Boris Becker in the first round, is now a match away from the final. He came into the tournament on the back of a good



Pierce enjoys her moment of triumph after beating Appelmans yesterday

performance in the Sydney International, where Henman beat him in the final, and has earned good notices.

"When I played the final in Sydney," he said, "it gave me confidence to realise that I was playing really well. I used to

be a slow starter, and that gave me confidence. I knew that I had to play Becker, but I went to the court with confidence. When I got there I had a look at the draw, it was 120 players and now I'm in the last four."

Coetzer overwhelmed Kimberley Po 6-4, 6-1 without having to show the form that accounted for Steffi Graf. Chang beat the skilful Marcelo Rios, of Chile, 7-5, 6-1, 6-4 in the last match of the night on Centre Court.

ICE SKATING

Cousins seizes early edge

AFTER the preliminary examinations yesterday of the pairs and ice dances in the European championships in Paris, the solo skaters are ready to enter the fray, the men with their short programme this afternoon, the women with theirs on Friday (John Hennessy writes):

The skaters principally under scrutiny are Viacheslav Zagorodnikov, of Ukraine, the winner in Sofia last year, and Irina Slutskaya, of Russia.

Within this international cauldron, a domestic showdown is also looming. It involves the new British men's champion, Neil Wilson, 18, of Belfast, and Steven Cousins, 24, of Dordrecht, seven successive times the champion before Wilson dislodged him at Guildford in November.

Cousins' improved his hopes of reversing those positions yesterday when he finished fifth in group B during the qualifying competition, with Wilson tenth. Qualifying, however, is capable of laying false trails.

At the sharp end, Zagorodnikov's position seems precarious. He was sixth in qualifying in group A on Sunday, and cannot rely on having been unopposed by anyone else. Michael Schumacher, an Israeli of Ukrainian origin.

Challengers from group B include Alexei Urmanov, the Olympic champion from Russia. As for Slutskaya, she has most to fear from her compatriot, Maria Butyrskaya.

RESULTS FROM MELBOURNE

Men's singles Quarter-finals C Moya (Sp) vs F Mantilla (Sp) 7-5, 6-2, 6-1, 6-0; M Chang (US) vs M Rios (Ch) 7-5, 6-1, 6-4	V Riera-Pascual (Sp) and P Suarez Ariz 6-3, 6-2; L Davenport (US) and L Raymond (US) vs C Martinez (Sp) and P Tarabini (Arg) 6-4, 7-5; J. Hantson (Aus) and M Sakurai (Jpn) vs N Karmali (Japan) and N Miyagi (Japan) 6-2, 6-3; G Fernandez (US) and A Sanchez-Vizcaino (Sp) vs N Anand (US) and M Bolagosi (Ind) 6-4, 7-5
Men's doubles Quarter-finals T Woodbridge (Aus) and M Woodhouse (Sp) vs M Camerin (It) and A Crivello (Sp) 6-3, 6-3; R Louch (Sp) and S Stam (US) vs E Fennell (Sp) and J Galichet (US) 7-5, 6-4, 6-2	Maid doubles Second round N Sludine (Aus) and J Eagle (Aus) vs A Ducharme-Balotin (Fr) and J Grabo (US) 6-3, 6-0; I Sorilea (Rom) and D Peterson (US) vs L Davenport (US) and G Cornett (Can) 7-6, 4-6, 6-4
Women's singles Quarter-finals A Coetzer (SA) vs M Po 6-4, 6-1; M Pierce (Fr) vs S Appelmans (Bel) 6-1, 6-4, 6-2	BOYS' DOUBLES: First round: N Healey (Aus) and L Hewitt (Aus) vs I Bates (GB) and K Chappell (Aus) 6-1, 6-2; D Steward (GB) and J Tremain (GB) vs I Lubovic (Crot) and F Luzzi (It) 6-3, 6-4
Women's doubles Quarter-finals M Hingis (Swt) and N Zvereva (Rus) vs	

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 44

FLUTE
(a) Francis Flute is an Athenian bellows-blower in A Midsummer Night's Dream. He is cast to play the heroine Thisbe in Quince's play, and finds it an embarrassing and awkward task. This is because he is a self-conscious youth — "Nay, faith, let me not play a woman" he says "I have a beard coming" — but his gawkiness greatly enhances both his portrayal of hapless Thisbe and his (few) lines in the rehearsal scenes.

SCROOP
(a) Lord Scroop in Henry V. Co-conspirator against Henry with Cambridge and Gray, notable for his fierce advocacy that the drunk who rallied at Henry's person should be punished "lest example breed, by his sufferance, more of such a kind" — advice that is subsequently and satisfyingly turned against the conspirators themselves.

BASSET
(a) A follower of Somerset and a member of the red-robe faction in Henry VI Part One. He quarrels with Vernon and takes him before Henry for judgment. As a result of this Henry tries to unite York and Somerset with him against a more pressing enemy, the French.

LOVELL
(b) Sir Thomas Lovell, a courtier in Henry VIII. Lovell has plenty to do, delivering messages, attending the king, discussing the latest news. He is discreet, anonymous and elegant court furniture that moves.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Nc6! Qxd5? 2. Ne7+ Kf5 3. Rf3+ forcing mate or 1. Rf1 and 1. ... Qxd5 2. Rf3 mate. In the game White chose the first of these alternatives.

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Awkward pauses and fluffed cues all round

Silence, then here we are, two men seated, one higher than the other in a pool of light in a darkened room. Could this be the start of something? There was an un-Pinteresque pause, as Harold Pinter wrestled with Sir Jeremy Isaacs's horror-story of a first question. Clad all in black against a black background and looking more like the start of something by Beck than one of his own, Pinter had a couple of garbled stabs before realising he was getting nowhere. No, he concluded miserably, as far as he could recall he had never started a play with one character higher than the other.

Things got steadily worse. Isaacs, our unseen interrogator, was having an off night with the questions, the normally reverent format of *Race to Race* (BBC2) was working, and Pinter was as nervous as a first night debutant. He gulped greedily at the tumbler of

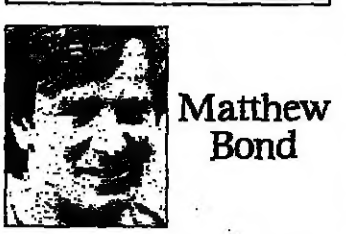
water, he shifted to and fro in his spool chair and every now and then he coughed. Was this the same cough, the act of unconscious aggression, that he would later criticise British theatre audiences for? I listened again. Gulp, cough, gulp, cough, cough. No, definitely nerves.

They were the nerves of somebody whose idea of the creative process is to lock himself into a darkened room, agonise over every word and comma, and emerge several years later clutching a masterpiece. Ask him to do it on the spot, there and absolutely then, and... he couldn't. Yes, he said, staring into the darkness for inspiration, language was enormously important to him. "I become very agitated when a sentence is badly formed." As one badly formed sentence followed another, we could see that "Yes, that's the word I was looking for," he said, as Isaacs rescued him

from one particularly nasty tangle. I began to feel rather sorry for him. Delaying just long enough to make some obscure point about Oxford linguistics and succeeding only in unsettling his subject still further ("I never attended a place of learning myself"), Isaacs quickly moved to the inevitable subject of the Pinter pause. "There are words and there are silences between words?" Yes. Terrible question. Good answer.

Isaacs tried again. "And is there silence within the words?" To-curling question, rewarded with a complex but not uninteresting answer about the "silence of fear" - fear of being known, of knowledge, of intimacy. So, began Isaacs - going for the big one - if we use words to protect ourselves, do your characters mean what they say or does what they say come from a place of fear? Well, yes, even the Cheshire Cat would

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

have had trouble with that. But for those interested, I think the answer was... a bit of both.

Eventually, and after a more successful section dealing with the playwright's childhood, Isaacs brought the painful process to a clichéd close. "Let's end with a silence." Pinter looked relieved and I murmured the unspoken question that has been on my mind. Why did you start writing? What do you un-

derstand as Pinteresque? Why are your plays getting shorter?

It was one of those nights when, for reasons known only to the channel schedulers, we never strayed far from the early 1960s. When Pinter was at his most prolific on this side of the Atlantic, the Kennedy years were being brought to an abrupt end on the other. Last night, that distinguished Washington veteran Charles Wheeler advanced his own theory about the Kennedy killing. Apparently somebody called Lee Harvey Oswald shot him. Sounds pretty unlikely to me.

Anyway, the result was that Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as President, started tape-recording his telephone calls and, 34 years later, Wheeler got the chance to play some of them back to us in *Secret History: Hello Mr President* (Channel 4). It was a programme that got better as it went along, as we were familiarised

(or in my case familiarised) with the President who, in Britain, is normally dismissed as the one who came between Kennedy and Nixon. It was Johnson, by the way, who advised Nixon to tape his own phone calls, a delicious nugget that Wheeler left until the end.

Wheeler, however, knows his Johnson backwards and proved an ideal guide to the recordings, backed up by a cleverly crafted combination of archive film, recreations and firsthand testimony from secretaries and advisers. This call, Wheeler announced, was "a classic example of Johnson's strong-arm technique". Others illustrated his "craving for praise", or his "disturbance of Kennedy's inner circle".

With the President's workaholic nature established, one call had him on to the head of the Civil Service seeking "the five smartest, best educated, fastest and pretest

secretaries in Washington". Thousands of miles away, in Cold War Moscow, a KGB colonel was putting together a not dissimilar list of qualifications for women suitable for a very different job: "charming, intelligent, and devoted to the motherland". Tick all three and you had just volunteered for a spot of "bed espionage", the tacky story of which was told in the predictably prurient but well researched *Inside Story: The Honeytrap* (BBC1).

As has become the norm, former KGB people queued up to talk to tell tales out of the Lubyanka to a Western documentary-maker. Using Russian women to recruit British agents was very difficult, we learnt, until the KGB discovered homosexuality and it suddenly became a whole lot easier. The Italians and Spanish were easy, but the Dutch were the worst. Almost impossible to recruit. We were never told why.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am BUSINESS BREAKFAST (25915)
 - 7.00am BBC BREAKFAST NEWS (1) (14687)
 - 9.00am BREAKFAST NEWS EXTRA (1) (467219)
 - 9.30am ALL OVER THE SHOP (8642667)
 - 9.45 KILROY (1648919)
 - 10.30am CANT COOK, WON'T COOK (86377)
 - 11.00am NEWS (7) and weather (808207)
 - 11.05am THE REALLY USEFUL SHOW (802260)
 - 11.45am SMILLIE'S PEOPLE Melvyn Bragg (822936)
 - 12.00am NEWS (7) and weather (722990)
 - 12.05pm THE ALPHABET GAME (8991174)
 - 12.30pm GOING FOR A SONG (4804826)
 - 12.55pm THE WEATHER SHOW (271936)
 - 1.00pm NEWS (7) and weather (17174)
 - 1.30pm REGIONAL NEWS (4478290)
 - 1.40pm NEIGHBOURS (7) (7491067)
 - 2.05pm POLICE RESCUE (8640280)
 - 2.50pm PUT IT TO THE TEST (361370)
 - 3.15pm HOLIDAY OUTINGS (845280)
 - 3.30pm PLAYBOYS (802648) 3.50pm
 - ChuckleVision (815894) 4.10pm
 - Pompeii and Son (1485464) 4.35pm The Wild House (7891261) 5.00pm Newsround (7) (883897)
 - 5.10pm Blue Peter (7) (152342)
 - 5.35pm NEIGHBOURS (7) (782613)
 - 6.00pm NEWS (7) and weather (551)
 - 6.30pm NEWSROUND SOUTH EAST (803)
 - 7.00pm A QUESTION OF SPORT England goalkeeper David Seaman, golfer, Laura Davies, champion National Hunt jockey Tony McCoy and England rugby union star Lawrence Dallaglio join team captains Ally McCoist and John Barnes, chaired by David Coleman (7) (4398)
 - 7.30pm TOMORROW'S WORLD Report on a pioneering supergroup to air alongside an alternative, folk-influenced British doctor who successfully repairs perforated eardrums. Plus, the sound quality of technologically advanced speakers (7) (777)
 - 8.00pm HOW DO THEY DO THAT? Eamon Holmes and Esther McVey meet the RAF pilots who took clear photographs of the enemy while flying at 40,000 feet, and how a team from the British Film Institute have successfully restored a 101-year-old movie. Plus, the amazing babies who can swim safely underwater (7) (825209)
 - 8.50pm POINTS OF VIEW (7) (462338)
 - 9.00pm NEWS (7) and weather (1803)
 - 9.30pm COMMON AS MUCK Tragedy strikes as the bin boys rush to the seaside to rescue Nev from the clutches of gold-digger Irene (7) (861483)
 - 10.25pm OMNIBUS: The Wanderer Pianist Andras Schiff profiles the Austrian composer Franz Schubert through his work, and performs a selection of his greatest works as well as long-neglected pieces (7) (970803)
 - 11.15pm FILM: Gallipoli (1981) Patrick Australiens Mel Gibson and Mark Lee join the Anzac Army to fight in the First World War, but soon find their youthful idealism eroded by the harsh reality of the conflict. Directed by Peter Weir (26071)
 - 1.05am WEATHER (525721)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCode. The numbers next to each programme listing are Video PlusCodes, which allow you to programme your video recorder to automatically find the programme you want to watch. To find the Video PlusCode for a programme, look at the Video PlusCode (+), Video PlusCode (+), and Video PlusCode (+) in the programme listing.

- BBC2**
- 6.00am OPEN UNIVERSITY: The Lastest Collection (4070919) 6.25pm Star Trek: Voyager (4082754) 6.50pm Melodrama (4750483) 7.15pm See Hear News (889532) 7.30pm Help! It's the Hair Bear Bunch! (2482028) 7.55pm Record Breakers Gold (2272424) 8.25pm Teddy Trucks (8081649) 8.50pm Sport (8208754) 9.30pm The Record (3329919) 9.50pm Jeanne Franco phones (8620445) 9.55pm See You, See Me (4586342) 9.45pm Words and Pictures (8151716) 10.00pm Playdays (52957) 10.30pm Numbers (8716377) 10.45pm Cats Eyes (874532) 11.00pm Around Scotland (5881280) 11.20pm Music Makers (5104464) 11.40pm Taking Issue (892261) 12.00pm Spanish Globo (7721532) 12.05pm History File (869715) 12.30pm Working Lunch (14222) 1.00pm The Geography Programme (8008803) 1.25pm Thunderbirds in France (8472820) 1.25pm Zag (8007392) 1.45pm Come Out Side (4708667) 2.00pm Teddy Trucks (8632288) 2.05pm Sport (8391551) 2.10pm Everyone's Got One (9121754) 3.00pm News (8120377) 3.05pm Westminster (7082025) 3.55pm News 4.00pm Today's Day (718) 4.30pm Ready, Steady, Cook! (703) 5.00pm Esther (2174) 5.30pm The Village (89184) 5.55pm Turning Point (81854) 6.00pm STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (7) (749754)
 - 6.35pm TENNIS Highlights from the Australian Open (135551)
 - 7.30pm ALVIN HALL'S GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL INVESTING (822)
 - 8.00pm DELIA SMITH'S WINTER COLLECTION: Peacocks and Marmalade (7) (7) (8398)
 - 8.30pm FRICK STEIN'S FRUITS OF THE SEA (218) The chef, a French restaurateur, who prepares a dish of squid, squid, squid, and squid, and how the perfect bouillabaisse is made (7) (1803)
 - 9.00pm ICE SKATING Coverage of the pairs free programme from the European Figure Skating Championships. Plus, highlights from the men's short programme (849735)
 - 9.50pm TROUBLE AT THE TOP Cameras follow Jonathan Heymes as he tries to turn Robert Motors into a successful company (7) (173803)
 - 10.30pm VIDEO NATION SHORTS (740071)
 - 10.30pm Newswatch (897303) 11.15pm This Life (361551) 11.55pm Weather (891532) 12.00pm The Midnight Hour (82385)
 - 12.30pm LEARNING ZONE: O.U.: Darwin and Diversity 1.00pm School of Games (59120) 1.30pm Rats and Super Rats (52977) 2.00pm Into Music (81551) 4.00pm English Heritage (52236) 4.30pm Unicorn in the Classroom (747385) 5.00pm Modern Apprenticeships (23217) 5.30pm Birds on Lowland Farms (83014)

Jonathan Heymes (9.50pm)

- BBC2**
- 6.00am GMTV (1595193)
 - 9.25pm WIN, LOSE OR DRAW (8627358)
 - 9.55pm REGIONAL NEWS (8420453)
 - 10.00pm THE TIME, THE PLACE (198193)
 - 10.30pm THIS MORNING (8308067)
 - 12.20pm REGIONAL NEWS (7729174)
 - 12.30pm NEWS (7) and weather (4822025)
 - 12.55pm SHORLAND STREET (4607716)
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 - 1.50pm AFTERNOON LIVE The guests are Sean Phillips and Dora Bryan (7460919)
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 - 5.10pm LOOK AND COOK: Classic Fruit Dishes (7) (8852358)
 - 5.40pm NEWS (7) and weather (848919)
 - 6.00pm HOME AND AWAY (7) (782716)
 - 6.25pm HTV NEWS (7) (532700)
 - 7.00pm EMERGENCY Frank vows to stop the rumours circulating about baby James (7) (8484)

Alvin Hall's Guide to Successful Investing (8.30pm)

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 - 9.55pm REGIONAL NEWS (8420453)
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 - 7.00pm EMERGENCY Frank vows to stop the rumours circulating about baby James (7) (8484)

Amelia Barrie, Helen Worth (7.30pm)

- SKY 1**
- 6.00am Morning Glory (827235) 6.30am
 - Dealing With Wives (1595) 7.00am
 - World (82829) 7.30am Another World (7358) 11.00pm Days of Our Lives (51532)
 - 12.00pm Oprah Winfrey (8428) 1.00pm
 - Gracie (4770) 2.00pm Baby Jane (8428) 3.00pm
 - 12.00pm Jerry Jones (8428) 4.00pm
 - Jack Weller (8428) 5.00pm Star Trek: The Next Generation (4551) 6.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551) 7.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551) 8.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551) 9.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551) 10.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551) 11.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551) 12.00pm Star Trek: Voyager (4551)
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- SKY 2**
- 6.00am Hercules: The Legendary Journeys (8428) 6.30am Renegades (8428) 7.00am
 - New York (8428) 7.30am New York (8428) 8.00am New York (8428) 9.00am New York (8428) 10.00am New York (8428) 11.00am New York (8428) 12.00am New York (8428)
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- SKY 3**
- 6.00am Sports Centre (12193) 6.30am
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- SKY 6**
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- SKY 7**
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AMERICAN FOOTBALL 43

Bledsoe's strong-arm tactics crucial to Patriots' game plan

SPORT

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 22 1997

TENNIS 46

Pierce raises roof to claim place in the last four



Townsend switched to stand-off

Scotland take wholesale half measures

By MARK SOUSTER

HAVING suggested in the immediate aftermath of defeat by Wales last weekend that a purge of the team was unlikely, the Scotland selectors appear to have had second thoughts. They have resorted to a radical overhaul of the side for the international against England at Twickenham on Saturday week.

The team, which was announced a week early yesterday to provide a longer period of preparation, shows seven changes, two of them positional. Bryan Redpath, Ronnie Eriksson, Derek Stark and Ian Smith are recalled, while Tom Smith, the Watsonians loose-head prop, is the one new cap. Gregor Townsend switches to stand-off half and Tony Stanger to outside centre. Richie Dixon, the Scotland coach, denied the changes were drastic but admitted that the make-up of the England team, which was named on Monday, had a significant bearing on the selectors' deliberations.

For some the surgery has not gone far enough, in that none of the 21-man A squad which emphatically beat Wales has been called upon, not even Alan Tait, whose shortage of top-flight rugby union since his return from league apparently counted against him. Others, such as Peter Wright and Eric Peters, can rightly feel aggrieved, but Arthur Hastie, the manager, said the whole of the A team had been considered and that those players should not be disenfranchised at being ignored for now.

The clarion call for the reinstatement of Townsend at No 10 has been heeded and he links up again with Redpath in the half-back partnership which served Scotland well last season, and was only interrupted by the latter's back

injury, which prevented him from touring New Zealand. Redpath wins his 22nd cap at the expense of Gary Armstrong, who, along with Craig Chalmers and Scott Hastings, is dropped to the replacement's bench.

Once the situation involving Townsend and Chalmers, which occupied much of the selectors' six-hour meeting on Monday night, had been resolved in the Northampton player's favour, the decision was taken to pick a side which, according to Dixon, "would

TEAM

SCOTLAND v England, February 1: R J S Shepherd (Melrose), D A Salk (Melrose), A G Stanger (Hawick), B R S Eriksson (London Scottish), K M Logan (Strling County), G P J Townsend (Northampton), G W Redpath (Melrose), T J Smith (Watsonians), D G Ellis (Currie), M J Stewart (Northampton), P Walker (Newcastle), G W West (Newcastle), A I Reed (Worcester), I R Smith (Gloucester), R I Wainwright (Watsonians, captain), R McGeachan (Hastings Watsonians), C M Chalmers (Melrose), G Armstrong (Newcastle), D S Murray (Glasgow High Kelvinside), D I W Hilton (Stirling), S J Brotherton (Melrose). Referee: P O'Brien (New Zealand).

create the environment in which Gregor would thrive". To that end, Eriksson, a hard-tackling inside centre, wins his third cap and Ian Smith returns at open-side flanker after surgery on a broken thumb, despite his relative inactivity with Gloucester.

Smith's understanding with Townsend, who plays the game close to the gain-line, was a feature of Scotland's approach last season and the two have considerable mutual respect. Smith's recall means that Murray Wallace loses out.

Stanger's move to outside centre is puzzling, although it is a position he has flirted with, not entirely convincingly,

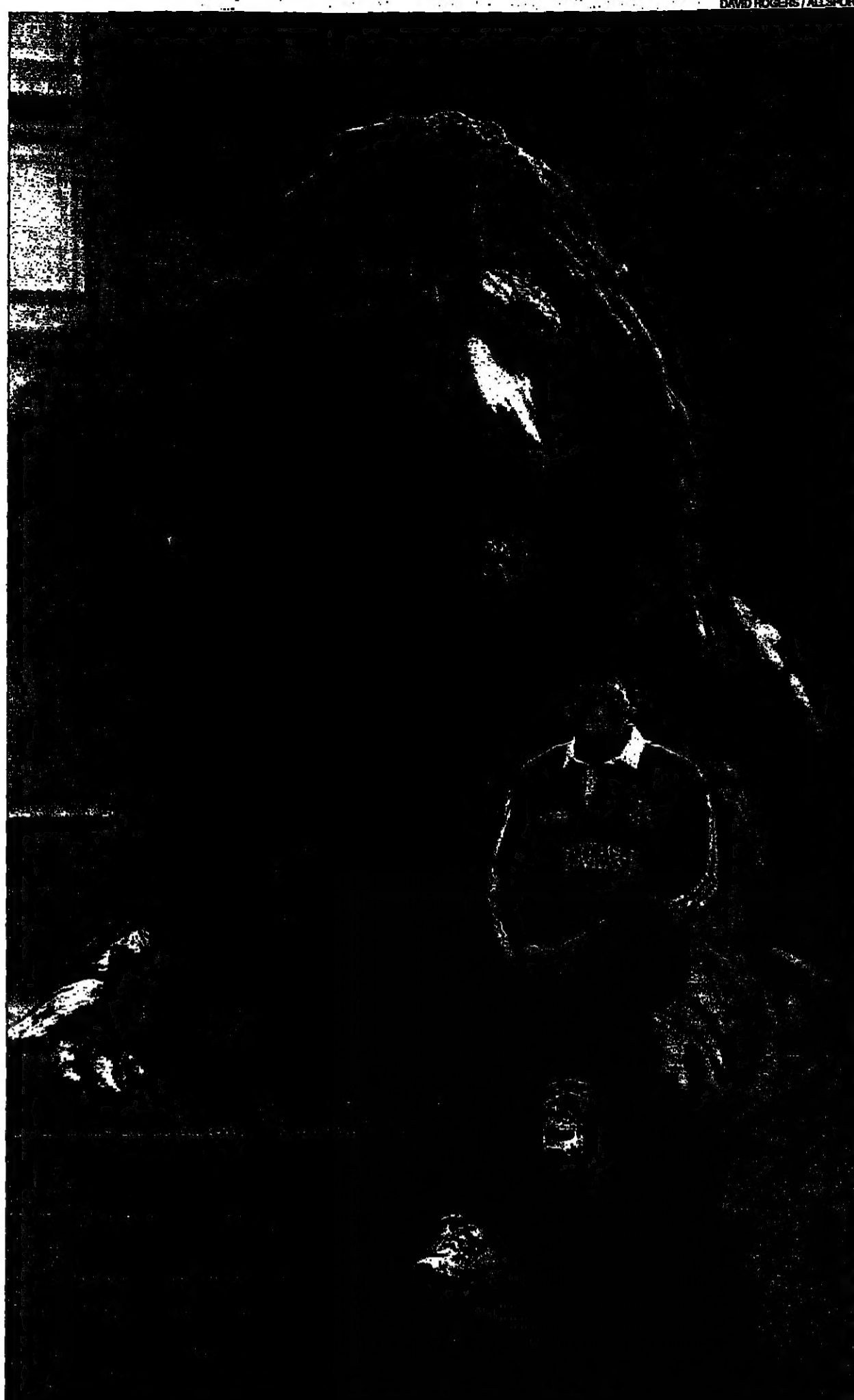
ly, for club and country over the past two seasons. A worrying lack of pace in the back three has partly been addressed by the inclusion of Stark: Rowen Shepherd and Kenny Logan survive despite their unhappy experiences at Murrayfield.

Tom Smith forms part of an inexperienced front row. With only three caps between them, this is an area which England will be looking to exploit. Smith, who makes his debut at the age of 25, was born in London and learnt the sport playing mini-rugby with London Welsh rather than attending Sunday school. He replaces David Hilton, an ever-present in the past 19 internationals.

Smith qualifies via Scottish grandparents and resembles David Sole in style and appearance, with a similarly single-minded approach to rugby. Once the doubts about his scrummaging had been answered in New Zealand, Smith's promotion was inevitable. He was also a key part of the Caledonia side which won the Inter-district championship.

Smith signed a full-time contract with the Scottish Rugby Union last autumn. He joined Watsonians last year, having played for Dundee High School Former Pupils, where he caught the eye of David Leslie, who at the time was manager of the under-21 Exiles side. Smith, a man of few words, stands 5ft 9in and weighs 17st 4lb.

Dixon remains upbeat despite the defeat by Wales. "It was a setback in terms of this year's championship," he said. "The first game you always want to play is against France, because even if you don't get it right against them the triple crown is still on. That and the grand slam have gone but the championship is still there. If we can win our next three games, to do that we will have to play particularly well, starting at Twickenham, which hasn't been a happy place for us recently."



Wainwright, the Scotland captain, who is among the favourites to lead the team in the summer, poses with one of Landseer's beasts in Trafalgar Square after the Scotland tour last year.

Selectors to name 60-strong shortlist for Lions

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE first million-pound British Isles rugby union touring party will be put together over the next two months. As the five nations' championship unfolds, so the 35 players who will represent the first professional Lions to make the trip to South Africa will come more sharply into focus.

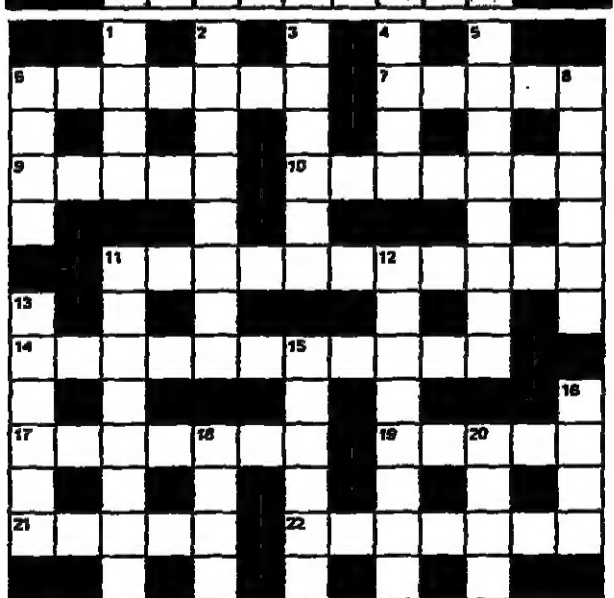
As the host union, South Africa will bear a substantial share of the £12 million cost, but the Lions will also be sponsored by Scottish Provident, the life assurance company, which will pay £400,000 for the right to have its name on the famous jerseys. The cost of support services will push the company's investment up to around £750,000 to a party that will include a management team of 11 — the biggest yet — including coaches, medical and media staff.

The Lions selectors will watch the next round of five nations' games on February 1, when England play Scotland and Wales entertain Ireland, before announcing a 60-strong squad from which they hope the final party, which will have three scrum halves and three hookers, will be drawn. "We have to pick players who are free-thinking, prepared to be positive and not stay in their shells, players who will have to make decisions," says McGeachan, who will be coaching his third successive Lions tour, said yesterday. "They must also be players with a hard mental edge because what we face is the equivalent of six, five nation matches, four Super 12 matches and three World Cup finals, all away from home."

The 60 players will meet on February 23 when the contractual arrangements for the tour will be outlined, and the programme of preparation. "It's important that we know early about the availability of players and that they, and their employers — the clubs — are comfortable with what is on offer," says Cotton, the Lions manager, said. "My view, after talking to many players, is that money is not the most important factor — this is the pinnacle of a British player's career." The tour party will be announced in early April and leave on May 17.

Underwood picked, page 45

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 997

ACROSS

- 6 Without depth: a Shakespearean Justice (7)
- 7 Mark separating list items (5)
- 9 Confess: allow in (5)
- 10 Agitated confusion (7)
- 11 Without much enthusiasm (4-7)
- 14 In powerless position (slang) (4,1,6)
- 17 Keenly purposeful (7)
- 19 Perform better than (5)
- 21 Guiding strings (5)
- 22 Official instructions: election-derived authority (7)

DOWN

- 1 Placid; windless (4)
- 2 Fleet of boats (8)
- 3 Small fabric sample (6)
- 4 Healed-wound mark (4)
- 5 A god; deathless (8)
- 6 Squash (fly) (4)
- 8 Make reference (6)
- 11 Priestly: sort of hieroglyphics (8)
- 12 (Travelling) off the ground (8)
- 13 Put one spending too long in (6)
- 15 Don't take for granted (6)
- 16 Central essence (4)
- 18 Force out (of job) (4)
- 20 Pitfall: old conveyance (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 996

ACROSS: 1 Amulet 5 Grab 9 Lepanto 10 Motive 11 Badinage 12 Livery 15 Garden 18 Tipstaff 20 Unique 22 Rampage 23 Gaze 24 Snipe

DOWN: 2 Mullah 3 Lopsided 4 Tonga 6 Rout 7 Beaver 8 Honey 13 Victims 14 Intern 16 Awning 17 Effite 19 Pumps 21 Quiz

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 992

ACROSS: 1 Howl 3 Keenest 8 Morocco 9 Tuber 10 Title 11 Waspish 13 Godfather 17 Unmasks 19 Sower 20 Panda 22 Headman 23 Yorkist 24 Undo

DOWN: 1 Humpty 2 Strazgeren 3 Know what's what 4 Satan 5 Rob 6 Larder 7 Sordid 12 Ourswoman 14 Hussar 15 Dumpty 16 Bronco 18 Swami 21 Nor

PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic or international network is J Gratton, Colchester, Essex.

PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic network is R Ogilvie, Peebles, Scotland.

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Maldini's defensive manoeuvres sweep Italy back to the future

FROM BRIAN GLANVILLE
IN PALERMO

BENEATH its imposing, even intimidating, craggy facade, the Favara Stadium and a packed, ecstatic Sicilian crowd await a diminished Northern Ireland and Cesare Maldini's remodelled Italy.

A remodelled Italy in that, after five years of four in line and pushing up to halfway under the never popular Arrigo Sacchi, back they go in an international football match tonight to the traditional orientation, a sweeper behind two markers.

Except that the designated sweeper, Ciro Ferrara, of Juventus, has not played as such for a long while and Paolo Maldini, the manager's son, is expected to be one of the central markers. It is a role that Maldini Jr has yet to fill, though he has, as he pointed out yesterday, played both as a centre back in a four-man defence and, of course, as an attacking left back.

So far he has had a curiously poor season and is only just back again after fracturing a cheekbone. Worse still has been the season of his AC Milan colleague, the other central marker, "Billy" Costacurta, who has been sent off in consecutive games.

But a Northern Ireland team without John Dowie or Phil Gray up front, without Magilton and Lennon in midfield, without Gillespie on the right wing, is hardly likely to apply great pressure.

Not that this has ever been its way. Last November, the Ulstermen achieved their gallant draw against Germany in Nuremberg, they had sweepers both behind and in front of the defence. Bryan

Hamilton, the Northern Ireland manager, has called in Jon McCarthy, the Port Vale midfielder player, to bolster his weakened squad.

Cesare Maldini, whose only chance this is before England and Wembley on February 12 to put the clock back successfully, said that he is not worried and he clearly is not. If things do not go right at first tonight, then they can be put right later.

The team that he has chosen shows no surprises: round up the usual suspects, with Gianfranco Zola up front, with big Gigi Casiraghi, with Fabrizio Ravanelli likely to be brought on in the second half. Del Piero could come on then, too; he has a stomach upset and, Cesare Maldini said, all will depend on how he looks in training this morning.

"There's no such thing as a friendly game," Gerry Taggart, Northern Ireland's resilient centre back and scorer of their goal in Germany, said. "They're probably only play-

ing us because they've got England and they want to try their system out."

Hamilton has not lost an away match since he took over three years ago. "The Italians, I feel, are a very good side although they have had some indifferent performances recently," he said.

Chelsea's two Italians, Zola and Roberto Di Matteo, seemed particularly cheerful.



Zola: cheerful

Gough opts to play for Kansas next season

RICHARD GOUGH, the Rangers and Scotland central defender, confirmed yesterday that he will play for Kansas City Wizards in the Major League next season. Two FA Carling Premiership clubs, believed to be Sheffield Wednesday and Southampton, had expressed an interest in signing Gough, 34, who also turned down offers from Japan and Europe.

Bristol City have banned 15 spectators for life for their part in violence after the 1-1

draw with Bristol Rovers in the Nationwide League second division match at Ashton Gate on December 15. A Football Association hearing into the crowd trouble takes place today.

Peter Boizot is expected to be confirmed as the owner of Peterborough United tomorrow. Boizot, 68, founder of the Pizza Express chain, has become the majority shareholder.

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